This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

**Usage guidelines**

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

+ *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.

+ *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.

+ *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.

+ *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

**About Google Book Search**

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at `http://books.google.com/`

NYPL RESEARCH LIBRARIES
3 3433 07606452 0

# Miss Schuyler's Alias

GEORGE HORTON

Asnvat
NEW-YORK
SOCIETY
LIBRARY
1758

# MISS SCHUYLER'S ALIAS

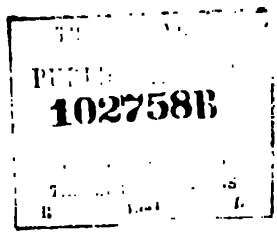
GEORGE HORTON

*Author of "Like Another Helen," "The Tempting of Father Anthony," "The Long, Straight Road," "In Argolis," "The Edge of Hazard," etc.*

RICHARD G. BADGER
THE GORHAM PRESS
BOSTON

COPYRIGHT 1913 BY RICHARD G. BADGER

All Rights Reserved




PROPERTY
OF THE
NEW YORK
SOCIETY LIBRARY

THE GORHAM PRESS, BOSTON, U. S. A.

F

CONTENTS


| Chapter | | Page |
|---|---|---|
| I | *Miss Schuyler Arrives* | 7 |
| II | *A Member of the Doolittle Colony* | 12 |
| III | *Four Diplomats Play Bridge* | 26 |
| IV | *Miss Schuyler Meets an Old Friend* | 39 |
| V | *Some Princes and a Few Common Mortals* | 53 |
| VI | *Prince Georgevitch Has an Idea* | 68 |
| VII | *Prince Georgevitch Makes a Discovery* | 74 |
| VIII | *And Begins a Campaign* | 80 |
| IX | *When Kingdoms Are at Stake, Lives Are Cheap* | 90 |
| X | *Prince Georgevitch Makes Progress as a Wooer* | 100 |
| XI | *A Dog Takes a Hand in Eastern Politics* | 110 |
| XII | *A Woman and a Wounded Prince* | 116 |
| XIII | *The Professor Has a Dream* | 121 |
| XIV | *A Prince Plows With a Heifer* | 134 |
| XV | *Miss Vandervoert Returns to Athens* | 139 |
| XVI | *And Becomes a Member of the "Fifty-Two"* | 148 |
| XVII | *The Diplomats Have Another Little Game of Bridge* | 160 |
| XVIII | *A Prince of Love Makers* | 169 |
| XIX | *The Arrival of the Black Sheep* | 173 |

CONTENTS


| *Chapter* | | *Page* |
|---|---|---|
| XX | *One Kind of a Gentleman* | 182 |
| XXI | *A Terrible Discovery* | 193 |
| XXII | *Mr. Parsons Performs an Unpleasant Duty* | 203 |
| XXIII | *The Professor in His Element* | 212 |
| XXIV | *A Mysterious Subterranean Tunnel* | 222 |
| XXV | *Miss Schuyler Has a Distressing Adventure* | 229 |
| XXVI | *Under the Shadow of Guilt* | 238 |
| XXVII | *The Man in the Black Domino* | 243 |
| XXVIII | *Miss Schuyler Removes Her Mask* | 253 |
| XXIX | *Prince Georgevitch Buys a Bunch of Violets* | 259 |
| XXX | *And Is Conditionally Offered a Crown* | 268 |
| XXXI | *Royal Destinies Impose Royal Deeds* | 272 |
| XXXII | *We Are Mere Puppets of Fate* | 281 |
| XXXIII | *The Discovery in the Underground Passage* | 291 |
| XXXIV | *Here a Gentleman Dies* | 301 |
| XXXV | *Miss Schuyler Meets the American Consul* | 307 |
| XXXVI | *And Is Congratulated by the American Minister* | 314 |
| XXXVII | *Prince Georgevitch Finds Life Worth Living* | 320 |
| XXXVIII | *Archaeology and Ice Cream* | 328 |

# Miss Schuyler's Alias

# MISS SCHUYLER'S ALIAS

## CHAPTER I

### *Miss Schuyler Arrives*

A big, red shepherd dog lay sleeping in the white dust and the yellow afternoon sun. Now and then he stroked his ear with a lazy paw, a purely mechanical movement, for not even the fierce Greek fleas were able to rouse him from his sleep. A moth-eaten, clay-blue donkey ambled by, carrying on his back a shepherd in white fustanellas, with a red handkerchief tied about his head in place of a hat. His milk cans rattled merrily, and where they caught the sun, flashed like mirrors. The road from Athens led by a peasant's cottage and outbuildings, surrounded by a high wall and on through barley-fields, dark green and yellowing in spots for the sickle. The donkey trotted down into the dry bed of a winter torrent so deep that all of animal and rider disappeared except the red handkerchief transformed for the moment into a huge poppy among the green on both sides of the invisible ravine. The sturdy little beast scrambled up the surface of the plain again, and followed

the road that led through slopes of fragrant thyme, where the bees were bustling among the flowers, for they were not yet full-laden and the sun was low.

The shepherd was young and handsome, and he was going to his flock and his hut of straw in the purple depths of the mountain, up by the spring and the ruined monastery of Kaisariane.

On the other side of the road from the peasant's cottage a large field of wild peas was in bloom, and among their pale green leaves and blue flowers the great Oriental poppies were scattered thick, or, having usurped the ground, rioted in whole acre patches, like splotches of dragon's blood.

Among the poppies a woman in white was slowly walking, with bent head and attentive eyes, and every now and then she stooped and broke off a stem close at the root. She was searching for flowers just opened, and for buds that would unclose during the night if the stalks were put in water. Often, at the slightest touch, the bitter waxen leaves would drop from the flowers, and float gently to the ground, that already was carpeted, if one pulled the verdure aside to look, with the petals of dissundered poppies.

The woman evidently possessed a soul that was at home in Greece at this season and this

hour, for she stood erect every few moments and looked in the direction of Parnes and the sea, gleaming about the skirts of Salamis, where a gorgeous sunset was preparing: then she would turn and cast an eager glance at Hymettus, to see if it had taken on a new color tone since her last glance, for it was passing through an infinite gradation of tints: ten minutes ago a vivid violet, now the color of purple wine when held between the eyes and the light.

For the Western slope of Hymettus, that turned toward the city of Athens, appears soft and smooth from a distance, and its deep, tender, ethereal colors are always transfused with light.

At one corner of the field of wild peas there was, and is, for that matter, a little Byzantine church in ruins. To this the woman in white now went, and, sitting down on the small grassy mound on which the ruin stands, proceeded to arrange her flowers, the while she continued to cast frequent glances, as before, at the sunset, and at Hymettus, that gigantic screen upon which the colors of the dying day were reflected, softened and spiritualized.

It chanced, as she looked towards the city, that she discovered a carriage lumbering along the road that led to the shepherd's cabin and on through the fields of fragrant thyme to the heart of Hymettus. At first the woman's curiosity was not greatly aroused, as the carriage might

very well have been going to some one of the houses that straggle beyond the outskirts of the town; its occupant, an arrival by the afternoon boat from Tinos or Syra, or by rail from Patras.

When she looked again, however, she became more interested, for she observed that the carriage had passed the last of the straggling houses, and, in a cloud of trailing dust, yellow as gold dust in the light of the late afternoon sun, was coming straight across the plain. This meant that its occupant was very probably coming to see her. There was an even chance, that is, that such was the case, for it was not likely that the vehicle was headed for the heart of Hymettus at such an hour, and peasants and shepherds do not often receive calls from people in carriages. So, as the woman in white was neither peasant, nor Greek, and as there was but one other foreigner living on the road, there was, as we have said, an even chance that the occupant of the carriage was coming to visit her.

As she raised her hand to shade her eyes from the yellow rays of the sun, now level, she observed that the approaching person was of the feminine sex, and it was evident, even at such a distance, that she was of those who wear fashionable hats, and know how to carry themselves.

The driver whipped up his horses, and the

carriage became the nucleus of a dust comet, streaming across the plain.

The woman with the poppies arose and walked slowly toward the road. Suddenly recognizing the occupant of the carriage she uttered an exclamation of joy, and ran, waving the flowers in the air.

"Jane Schuyler!" she cried, "Jane Schuyler! Where in the world did you come from? and what are you doing here?"

The driver brought his horses to a stop.

"Is that you really, Priscilla?" said the new comer. "I should not have known you had I met you in the street, in that queer costume. You don't look half bad, in it, though. I came from Egypt, and I am here simply and solely for the purpose of visiting you."

## CHAPTER II

### *A Member of the Doolittle Colony*

MISS Schuyler leaned over, opened the carriage door and was about to step out, when the dog suddenly flew toward her, his back arched, his teeth showing and his hair sticking out in all directions like bristles. He appeared double his former size. Miss Schuyler slammed the door to with a scream.

"Can he jump into the carriage?" she shouted, for the savage animal was now making a din that rendered normal conversation impossible.

By way of reply, Miss Bates stooped as though about to pick up a stone, whereupon he ran snarling into the peasant's yard, where he was tied up.

"It's the only thing they're afraid of," she explained. "If a shepherd dog runs at you, just pretend to pick up a stone, and he'll take to his heels or whatever dogs take to. But do get out and come into the house, Jane."

It took considerable persuading to induce Miss Schuyler to set foot upon the ground and more to enter the peasant's yard, for the ferocious brute, the moment he saw her, tugged so spitefully at his chain and barked so savagely that she was sure he would get loose.

She crossed the yard at last and entered a small room furnished with a single bed, a kitchen chair, a crude wooden table, and a three-legged iron wash stand. Miss Bates seated herself on her trunk, at the foot of the bed, and offered her guest the chair.

"Do you mean to say that you are living in this one little bare room, Priscilla?" demanded Miss Schuyler. "It's so — so poorhousy!"

She was not afraid of offending, because she knew that the other was perfectly able to live differently, if she choose.

"The ancient Greeks," replied Miss Bates, "were for the most part contented with small, bare houses. They spent much of their time in the open — at the market, in the gardens of the philosophers, by the river-side watching athletic contests, on the hills with the sheep. Their houses were merely places to sleep in."

She was dressed in a long white chiton of soft wool, fastened at the shoulders with brooches, and girt high about the waist. Her feet were bare, with the exception of sandals, and nearly all of her plump arms, browned by the sun, as well as several inches of her very plump legs, scarred by contact with thyme bushes and an occasional thistle, were visible to any who choose to look.

Miss Bates was living evidence of the fact that the ancient Greek Costume lent a certain

grace to figures that were no longer sylphlike; for she acknowledged to 35, albeit she did not encourage people in questioning her too closely as to the number of years that had been consumed in the various phases and periods of her existence — the unromantic American, the ambitious Parisian, the artistic Venetian, the mystic English.

Miss Bates, the reader should know, was one of a large number of unmarried ladies, chiefly American, who live abroad on incomes of various sizes.

It may also be interesting to observe in this connection that the remarks of Malvolio concerning greatness, apply equally well to old-maidenhood. Some women are born old maids, some achieve old maidenhood, and others have it thrust upon 'em.

The reason that Miss Bates was unmarried, though confessing to 35, will appear hereafter. Though wearing the brand of spinsterhood, which is always as clear as the mark of Cain or an odd-fellow's badge, yet she was one of those women who suggest matrimony as their natural element as unmistakably as a fish suggests water. There were no sharp, repelling angles, either of her form or her disposition; for all her extraordinary-in-this-age and date-of-the-world costume, she seemed lost without a man, there was something motherly about her, she was the

kind of woman a man thinks of when he is misunderstood or sick.

For the rest, her face was round, her lips full and red, her nose a trifle too small, her eyes brown, her hair of the same color and without a suspicion of grey. A fillet of white ribbon was the only classic touch of which her head or face could boast.

"I spend most of my time in the open," she continued, "like the Ancient Greeks, gathering the poppies and anemones that they gathered, listening to the same shepherds' pipes that they heard, watching the same colors on Hymettus, the same sunsets behind Salamis and Parnes, strolling in the wild thyme, among which the bees of Theocritus still swarm."

Miss Schuyler laughed — a remarkably honest laugh, ripe with genuine amusement and good fellowship, but with no touch of enjoyment at another's expense in it.

"You certainly are enthusiastic, Priscilla," she observed, "but I remember you were equally so three years ago about the Holy Grail. Have you given up the Quest for good, then?"

Priscilla crossed her hands over her right knee for a moment and sat looking straight before her, with the far-away gaze of the mystic.

"Alas! for the present, yes" she sighed, "I fear that it will never be found in our age, for only those whose souls are spotlessly pure are

permitted to see it. I used to think that I should be one. At Glastonbury I had a dream that I saw it, and then I awoke to a sense of my unworthiness. Do you think I really saw it in my dream, Jane?"

Miss Schuyler laughed again.

"I think you are a dear, and just as refreshing as ever. You don't know how glad I am that I came to see you! I was getting so tired of doing and hearing and eating and wearing and seeing the same things, and of being eternally courted and worshipped for my money. You are different, Priscilla, and your world, for the time being, is always real."

"I learned of this world," said Priscilla, "by seeing Miss Pauline Doolittle dance in Greek costume in London. I called on her, and she told me that she was beginning to have disciples, people who are living as the Ancient Greeks used to live, their religion the worship of beauty. It is not so different from the Quest of the Grail, this life. That too, was the Quest of Beauty, the Beauty of purity, of lovely deeds, of romance, chivalry, enchantment. This, for the Beauty of nature, form, sound, thought, ideals. It is all a striving for truth.

> "Beauty is truth, truth Beauty,
> That is all ye know and all ye
> need to know."

"But why did you come out here in the country, to this little peasant's hut?"

"Athens," replied Priscilla, "is the only unnatural thing about Greece. It is an artificial little French city, with trolley cars, automobiles, bands that play Sousa marches in the square, candy-shops, hotels with lifts, American tourists with Kodaks. What did Ancient Athens know of these things? Listen!"

A shepherd's pipe was heard in the distance, monotonous, minor, sweet, the primeval music of Pan, the Father of all musicians. Miss Schuyler arose and went to the door. She was a full head taller than Miss Bates, and was slender and athletic of build. She was a striking contrast to her companion, as her dress, a simple walking costume of pale brown linen was cut in the latest style, and her hat, of the basket form then so much in vogue, was trimmed with a huge, expensive feather from Paris, where all her clothing was made.

The two women now stood on a wide veranda looking into a court on the other side of which were the chicken, cart and other outhouses of the family. The dog, on seeing the stranger, again began to snarl and leap savagely to the end of his chain.

"Even that dog," explained Priscilla, "is the true ancient type that one sees on the grave stelae. His very savageness is Greek, true

Greek. Do you remember how the dogs in the Odyssey came near tearing Ulysses limb from limb when he returned to Ithaca?"

"Well," gasped Miss Schuyler, "that's a diversion which I should not enjoy, however classically it might be performed. He's a nasty, ugly brute!"

A little girl ran up to the dog and putting her arm about him, persuaded him to be quiet.

"When you once win his confidence," explained Priscilla, "he will never bark at you again, and he will fight for you to the death in case of need. Do you remember how Ulysses' dog remembered him after twenty years of absence, and died of joy on seeing him?"

The court of the peasant's house was a pleasant enough place. It rejoiced in one large platanos tree, which shaded the stone mouth of a well, built high to keep children and kids from falling in.

The little girl, now hugging the dog, never attempted to look into the mysterious depths of the well, for she had been told that a Lamia dwelt there and that a fearful head with teeth big as grave stones and wide open eyes, like a dead person's, would stare up at her.

The peasant's wife came running out with two chairs which she set down under the tree, invitingly, and taking the bucket from the lip of the well, she sent it whirring down, con-

trolling the speed by holding her hand upon the wooden shaft of the creaking windlass.

"You will have to drink a cup of Turkish coffee and a glass of water now," explained Priscilla, "and eat a spoonful of preserved rose leaves. Don't refuse. You'll hurt her feelings if you do. And now, tell me all about yourself since last we met. And first: are you engaged? How do you manage to keep single with all your charm of manner, your good looks, your accomplishments and your money?"

"It's my money that keeps me single," replied Jane, "but here come the preserved rose leaves. How am I to eat them?"

"You don't eat them all. You take a spoonful, put the spoon on the tray, take a swallow of water, and then smile delightedly, as though you had never tasted anything so good in your life—that last by way of payment. Watch me, and do as I do and then tell me how your money prevents your getting married."

Miss Schuyler followed instructions to the minutest detail and the expression of delight as she withdrew the spoon from her pretty mouth, if not genuine, was worthy of an actress.

"Did you ever hear of an obsession, Priscilla?" she asked.

"Yes, I think I have a pretty clear idea of an obsession; a sort of intellectual or spiritual old man of the sea."

"Well," continued Miss Schuyler, "I want to get married."

"To whom?" asked Priscilla, regarding her friend with intense interest, as one about to hear exciting and long desired news.

"To a man."

"Very naturally," said Priscilla, impatiently. "But to what man, to whom? You can't be thinking of getting married, unless you have some particular man in view. And if so, there's nothing to prevent your getting married—you, with all your money, even if he was as poor as Lazarus. Unless—oh Jane,—you poor thing! Unless he's married!"

"I want to be married to a man," exclaimed Jane, whimsically and bitterly in one, "a man in general, a male of the human species, I don't want to be an old maid. I want to have a lord and master who is kind, unreasonable, domineering, and helpless without me, all in one. I want to have children, one, two, five, ten, all the good Lord in the abundance of his mercy, sees fit to send me. I want a man, I don't care who he is, prince, philosopher, or chauffeur, so long as he is honest and strong, and don't wear a bracelet or chin whiskers."

"But you have had hosts of admirers, and many that any woman might think of seriously."

Into Miss Schuyler's eyes came a shrewd

look and a hard expression upon her comely face.

"They all want my money," she said, in a low tone, as though fearful that this suspicion, so bitterly uncomplimentary to herself, might be overheard and understood, even in the Greek peasant's yard. "That is my obsession, the obsession of every rich woman, who is not a vain silly fool. In ninety-nine cases out of a hundred the rich woman who gets married is wooed and won for her money and not for herself. It is the designing, mercenary man who courts her, while the really noble and high-minded youth avoids her for fear of being thought a fortune hunter."

Miss Schuyler was talking very rapidly now and bitterly. It was plain to be seen that she was on her hobby.

"You have no idea how diabolically shrewd men are," she continued. "A friend of mine met a poor young man in the slums of Chicago, engaged in settlement work. He had given up a brilliant career, as she thought, to devote his life to his less fortunate fellows. She had three millions which she did not know how to spend, and she thought this young man would help her distribute it, or the income from it rather, among the poor. She proposed to him and they were married, when she promptly found out that he had entered settlement work

just to catch a rich woman. He is a hard-headed, masterful, ambitious man, who needed money for his career. He is now governor of his state and there is no knowing where he may land."

"He seems to be giving value received," observed Priscilla. "Does he ill use her?"

"No; he is too big a man for that. She admires him, I think. Besides, he has completely changed her character. She has given up settlement work entirely, and has become absorbed in his ambition."

"She is not unhappy then?"

"No, but just to think of it! Don't you see, Priscilla? Is a woman an independent and responsible human being, or is she a mere lump of putty, a makeshift, a means to an end? If the latter, it would, of course, be impossible to love her, in a high, noble, equal way."

"You are too pessimistic, dear," said Priscilla. "It would not be at all hard for a man to love you. Let me take an inventory of your attractions: Item, one tall elegant figure, one great mass of straw-colored hair, one broad low forehead, one straight, almost classical nose, one round chin, strong, but not too large for symmetry, two very red lips, not too thick, and a deep, winter-rose tint in your cheeks, browned by all sorts of out door exercise—golf, riding, yachting, and I don't know what

else: two reddish brown eyes with long curving lashes, much darker than your hair. Jane, why don't you wear the ancient Greek costume? You have no idea how classic you would look, with that hair done up in old Greek style, and a fillet around it, and that classical nose of yours."

"A fillet around my nose?"

"No, how absurd! I mean your nose deserves to be dressed in Greek costume, or, that is to say, would look more at home in a classical setting."

"Oh, I don't believe anything could make my nose more classical than it is!" laughed Jane. "That is one point that my numerous admirers have been most eloquent on. If one ever selected the nose as a subject for sonnets, they would have dedicated verses to it. But goodness, it is nearly seven o'clock. I must be going back or I shan't get any dinner."

They walked out into the road and found the cabman staring at the moon, just rising behind Hymettus. It was of enormous size, a golden yellow, and perfectly round. The lonely slopes of the mountain were laid deep with old Roman gold, the whole Attic plain was poured full of dim refulgence, in which trees and other objects stood out startlingly distinct. The moon-light fell like snow on the city of Athens, and the Acropolis, grey as a phantom.

"Look at the cabman," whispered Priscilla. "He has old Greek blood in his veins. He is worshipping. He ought to be dressed in classic costume, and his cab should be a chariot."

"I'm sure the cab is more comfortable," laughed Jane, "I hope you won't convert the cabmen till after I leave Athens."

She poked the Jehu gently with her parasol, and he started as a man awakened from a dream, jumped down and opened the carriage door.

"He's so obsequious, he must have divined that I am rich," observed Miss Schuyler. "It's a thing that all men smell out by a sort of sixth sense. I'm going to see you every day, Priscilla," she announced, as soon as she was comfortably seated. "I've put up at a humble pension and intend to live very simply—as a schoolma'am or something of that kind, to get away from all the frivolities of society and the adulation of the mercenary suitors. No one knows me here but Laselle, the Secretary of our legation, and he won't betray me. If you do, I shall leave immediately. I shall call myself Miss Vandervoert while I'm here—Jane Vandervoert, and I see no reason why, with good luck, I shouldn't be able to stay on here several months without being known. What joy it will be! To know that I am estimated by the world, and especially by the males in it,

at my own intrinsic value. To breathe the air of sincerity for a while, Priscilla! I wonder why I have never thought of it before? This obsession of mine is such an unpleasant one. Perhaps I shall get rid of it here. Good night, dear Pris—don't laugh at me, I'm no crazier than you are."

On the way back to town the cabman beat his horses cruelly, and Miss Schuyler found herself wondering if cruelty to animals was an ancient Greek trait.

## CHAPTER III

### *Four Diplomats Play Bridge*

A GARDEN party was in progress at the Italian Legation, on the street of Herodes Atticus. Colored Chinese lanterns, twinkling and flaring among the palm and lemon trees, and the oleander bushes now in full bloom transformed the garden, always beautiful, into fairy-land. The weather had been hot during the day, though the month was only April, but this evening a fresh breeze was blowing up from the sea at Phaleron, bringing every now and then the sweet, intoxicating breath of trees in bloom; mandarins, accaccias, myrtles, almonds, angelicas. Hidden in a bower of roses the famous Athens mandolin orchestra was playing waltzes and polkas, and bits of Oriental music. The sweet sound of the instruments seemed fairly to madden with envy the choir of nightingales in the king's garden on the opposite side of the road, for they could be heard singing deliriously whenever the stringed instruments were silent. Diplomats in pompous uniforms strolled among the trees with princesses and great dames of the court upon their arms, and young officers and secretaries, gay as peacocks, flirted in the shadow with girls in white

and pink and blue, or gossiped as vapidly as only secretaries and officers can. The doors and windows of the magnificent residence were thrown open to let in the soft spring air, and by these the couples waltzing in the ball room could be seen to flit continually.

On one end of the wide veranda sat their Excellencies, the ministers of four of the so-called "Great Powers," to all appearances absorbed in a game of bridge.

"I make it hearts," said the Minister of the First Great Power, a clean-shaven man, whose thin, young face, white hair and soft voice suggested the country parson, but whose outward features were a mask for the real man revealed, and at the same time dissembled, by his shrewd, inscrutable grey eyes.

"My Imperial Master," observed the Minister of the Second Great Power, "will always insist upon the integrity of the Turkish Empire."

Sir James Winter turned politely to the Minister of the Third Great Power.

"Do you double hearts?" he asked.

"Double?" repeated Baron Stransky, in a startled tone, for the game was for a drachma the point. "No! that is to say, we will play hearts."

The Minister of the Second Great Power laid his cards face up on the table, arranging the

suits with great deliberation. His hands were small and white, and shapely as a woman's, despite the fact that he was a large, corpulent man with a big square chin, a fierce military moustache, and something about him that suggested fancied resemblance in his own mind, to the "Iron Chancellor."

Having laid down his cards he took from his vest pocket a solid gold cigarette case, adorned with the Imperial coat of arms and a huge diamond, opened it, and extracted from it a very small slender cigarette, which a watchful attendant immediately lighted for him.

It was evident that Count von Alutius was used to perfect attendance, for he had not even cast his eye about for a means of lighting his cigarette, but took as thoroughly for granted the noiseless and timely appearance of a burning match before his nose as he would have done were people actually served in this day by invisible lackeys who materialized out of thin air in response to the slightest wish.

The cigarette case, along with the decoration of the Golden Stork, was an evidence of his Imperial Majesty's esteem, and as often as the Count looked at it, his resolve to be a vigilant guardian of his exalted master's interests was renewed.

"My Imperial Master," he repeated, gazing at the Coat of Arms, "will insist upon the integrity of the Ottoman Empire."

"If Von Alutius insists on talking politics," remarked Baron Stransky Von Stranograde, whimsically, "we must forego bridge. The two really important matters of the day, as near as I can make out, are the Eastern Question and Bridge, either so absorbing that you can't do more than one at a time. Two similar pursuits," he went on, as though pleased with his conception, "nobody understands either thoroughly, both are capable of infinite variations, the element of chance enters largely into both, and eh, well, your Excellencies, to be plain, the holder of the best cards wins!"

Stranograde was a very tall man with a large nose, thin face and scanty grey hair.

"It's your deal, Troyanski," he said to the Minister of the Third Great Power, as though he had explained everything and the game might now go on.

Ivan Troyanski began to deal the cards, the precision and rapidity with which they fell into little piles before the players revealing long and continued practice. When half through he cast a furtive eye about him, to make sure that no one was listening, and remarked:

"The integrity of the Turkish Empire, Excellencies, is a phrase which has a meaning, and yet has no meaning. Exactly what is the Turkish Empire? Would anybody say that it today includes Bulgaria? Does it today lay

claim to Bosnia and Herzegovina?" and he bowed politely in the direction of Stranograde.

"The annexation of those provinces to Austria is a fait accompli," explained Von Alutius, "The independence of Bulgaria is a fait accompli," here he took another cigarette and his eyes fell upon the Coat of Arms on the golden case, "It has been recognized by my Imperial Master. A fait accompli is not taken into consideration in discussing a diplomatic axiom. The integrity — "

At this moment an extremely handsome and very smart officer in the dress uniform of a captain of artillery, presented himself before the group, saying, with a graceful bow:

"Your pardon, Excellencies, but I am come on an imperative, though agreeable mission. Her Royal and Imperial Highness, the Princess Helen, commands his Excellency, Count Von Alutius to waltz with her."

The count gave one more glance at the Coat of Arms, shut the cigarette case together with a snap, and arose.

"A thousand pardons, gentlemen," he said, "a royal command —" and he moved off in the wake of the captain.

His three confreres sat gazing after him, toward the ball room, whence the strains of a waltz were now issuing, mingling sweetly, yet discordantly with the wilder notes of a Hun-

garian rhapsody, played by the Mandolinata, in its bower of roses.

Sir James Winter was the first to speak.

"How well we all know," he observed dreamily, as though under the influence of the waltz, "that there is no such thing as sentiment in diplomacy! Of course Von Alutius is referring to the troublesome province of Tarachia, and he, like the rest of us, is a mere mouthpiece of the policy of his government. I must confess that I, personally, am influenced by the fact that the Tarachians have fought persistently for their freedom for the past 1,000 years. Their history during that period is little more than an account of successive revolutions against the nominal lords of their province, and of reprisals against them in the form of some of the most horrible massacres on record. Though their coast towns have been occupied by garrisons, and many of the richest estates in their valleys been seized, as a people they have never been conquered, but have held their mountains as bravely as the Swiss ever held theirs. They have not mingled their blood with that of the foreigner, either, to any great extent, but have preserved it and their racial characteristics unchanged to the present day. If ever a people earned their liberty and the right to choose their own form of government, the Tarachians are that people."

"Um" — commented Stranograde, "If Von Alutius were not at this moment dancing with her Imperial Highness, he would have remarked that the right to liberty is earned, when liberty itself is made a fait accompli by the people who seek it!"

Sir James cast an eye about to see if any listener were standing too near, and replied:

"That the Tarachians will never consent to any arrangement which is forced upon them, and that, if their wishes are not consulted they will always be a source of trouble and of danger to the peace of Europe, may I think, be regarded as a fait accompli!"

At this moment a man, in simple evening dress, but wearing upon his breast and his coat several high decorations, passed by with a young woman upon his arm. They were a striking contrast, these two, albeit both were tall and well formed. The man may have been about 35 years of age, and was sallow, slender and of an aristocratic elegance of appearance and carriage that suggested noble descent. His hair was raven black, and the beginnings of baldness increased the hight of a rather narrow forehead. For the rest, his prominent nose came straight down without any depression at all at the eyes, which were large and black as midnight. His mouth was wide, and the lips thin, though red. When he smiled, an expres-

sion with him rather of deference and extreme politeness than of keen amusement, he disclosed teeth of pearly whiteness and of perfect regularity. Though not ill-favored, one would say that he was distinguished-looking rather than handsome. There was about him a general air of sadness and mystery.

The girl was a blonde, radiant with health and vivacity. Her robe had been ordered especially from Paris, with the express object of being the most expensive and beautiful gown worn on this occasion, a unique event in her life. She was good-natured, frank and direct, and though charming, talked and laughed a little louder than was strictly conventional.

"Now, Prince," she was saying, "you must tell me all about the Royalties. This thing of course is a continuous performance for you, and royalties are as common to you as frogs in a puddle. But for me they are the rarest kind of avises. Now, King George, you were saying, is the brother of the Dowager Empress of Russia, the Queen of England and King of Denmark. Let's see, that would make him the brother-in-law of King Edward, wouldn't it? But what relation would he be of the Czar?"

The person addressed as "Prince" leaned politely in the direction of the charming ear next to him, and evidently gave the desired information, though he spoke so low that his an-

swer could not be heard by the representatives of the Great Powers.

"That charming creature must be an American," remarked Stranograde. "No other race is so keenly interested in all that pertains to Royalty."

Here Ivan Troyanski picked up the cards absent mindedly and began shuffling them. He was so bald and there was such a luxurious growth of reddish brown whisker upon his entire face that his features seemed to have been set upon the wrong side of his head.

"Georgevitch" he remarked, casually, "is in pursuit of an American fortune—a great and princely one befitting his title. He has always been bitterly disappointed over the fact that the Hegemony of Belgravia was not given to his father, and now that Belgravia has been erected to a kingdom, his disappointment must be still greater. He finds himself in straightened circumstances financially, and the possessor of a title which without the necessary funds, does not mean much to him."

"This may not be an inappropriate time to remark," said Sir James Winter, "that my government is not opposed to the plan of making Tarachia a Principality, practically independent, though under the nominal suzerainty of the Porte. With this concession it is hoped the people would quiet down, and the integrity

of the Turkish empire, which, according to Von Alutius, is so necessary to the peace of Europe, would be, for the present, preserved. I might add, that my advice has been asked as to the selection of a candidate for the post, and I have already suggested, ah — Georgevitch."

"I fear such a suggestion, if carried out, would be fatal to the prospects of our fair friend from America," observed Stranograde. "We should have to pick out a wife for the Prince — if he became a prince indeed — eh, Winter?"

"Oh, of course," replied Winter, "many things would be taken into consideration in the choice of his wife. By the way, have either of you thought over this matter? This possible solution of the Tarachian question, that is to say?"

Both of the other ministers answered with astonishing frankness. It seems that both had recently corresponded with their governments on the subject: that Troyansky had already suggested the name of Georgevitch and that Stranograde had been commanded to furnish certain information regarding him.

At this moment Count Von Alutius returned and the game of Bridge was resumed.

In the meantime the subject of the foregoing conversation had been standing at the edge of the so-called "quadrille," a square dance in

which any number of couples can take part, pointing out, as unobtrusively as possible, the various members of royalty present, and explaining to the charming, though insatiable American, their relation to the various crowned heads of Europe.

"And you are really leaving on the tomorrow?" said Georgevitch, when they had strolled out into the garden again, where the mandolins were playing, and the nightingales could be heard in the garden opposite.

"Yes, Prince, by the seven o'clock train for Patras. Aren't you sorry?"

"I am, in effect, desolated," replied the Prince, and the natural gravity of his demeanor, amounting almost to sadness, seemed to remove the statement from the realm of banality and coquetry. "I love the Americans and the American women, and am never really happy but in their company. And you are the most charming representative of your great nation!"

"Well, good night, Prince, and good bye," she said, "you have certainly given me the time of my life. If you ever come to Truckee, you must look me up. Don't forget the name: Julia Calvert, daughter of Maldo Calvert, proprietor of the Three Star Gold Mine. Everybody knows dad in Nevada. All you have to do is to remember 'Calvert.'"

She extended a round, firm arm of dazzling whiteness, gave his hand an honest, New World shake and was gone.

He turned back toward the house with the words, "Three Star Gold Mine," still jingling in his ear, and her young, strong magnetism flowing through his veins like a draft of rare wine. He fancied her gone out of his life forever, unless, indeed he made a journey some day to the town with the (to him) barbarous name of Truckee, when again he felt the light touch of her hand upon his arm.

"Ah, this is indeed an unexpected joy!" he murmured.

"I just came back to ask you," she said, "to look up my friend Jane Schuyler, and tell her you saw me. I hoped to find her here tonight. I saw her today in a carriage. I called to her. but she did not hear me."

"And who is Miss Schuyler?" asked the Prince. "For purposes to identify, solely. That she is a friend of yours suffices."

"She is an old college friend. She is tall, handsome and awfully clever, and incidentally, she is one of the greatest heiresses in America."

The Prince hurriedly searched his pockets for a bit of paper and a pencil.

"I will write her name," he explained, "That she is a friend of yours makes it necessary to be found."

He wrote the name, carefully.

"And is she also from Truckee?" he asked.

"Oh my, no! Schuyler, of the Schuylers of Philadelphia. Her father was John Schuyler, the railroad king and great philanthropist. And now, good bye for good, Prince, and don't forget Truckee!"

Prince Nicholas Georgevitch sought out his host and hostess, bade them good-night, and went to his lodgings. The next morning he arose at eleven, an hour earlier than his wont, and told his man to look over the registers of the various hotels and enquire confidentially of such servants as he knew, until he should succeed in locating the Athenian domicile of one "Mees Jane Schuyler." Then he wrote his friend, the Austrian Consul in Philadelphia, for confidential particulars as to Miss Jane Schuyler, her family, social connections, etc., as well as the amount of her fortune, in what securities it was invested, and the extent of her control over it. He also begged the Consul to obtain secretly, and to forward to him, a photograph of Miss Jane Schuyler, the heiress. He did not propose to take any chances.

## CHAPTER IV

*Miss Schuyler Meets an Old Friend*

ON the side of the Hill of the Pnyx which slopes toward the Attic plain and the Bay of Phaleron, four people were standing, looking toward Salamis. One of them was a man about fifty years of age, with a florid complexion, red, bristling moustache, pointed grey beard, still reddish near the roots, shaggy grey eyebrows and a high, narrow forehead. A bald swath, extending from the temples backward increased the intellectual effect of his features and his calling, which was that of professor of archaelogy in a famous American college. His cheek bones were high, and his hair stood up in reddish tufts above his ears, as though the two sides of his face had been massaged persistently upward. He had thick, red lips which he was in the habit of pursing for a moment judicially whenever asked a question, and his nose was large and bony. He was a little man who stood very straight, with something of the military in his deep chest and square shoulders, and he wore gold spectacles, through which gleamed a pair of kindly and keen eyes.

Such was Professor Goodwin Harkins, who was supposed to know as much about Greek

Archaelogy as any man living, and more than any other about the Minoan Age. He had never married for the simple reason that in his early days he had been too poor to support a wife, and of late too absorbed in his studies of the past to give heed to the wiles of the numerous fair ones who would gladly have shared his lot. As he had once quaintly remarked, he was a second Ulysses, and archaeology was the wax in his ears.

For an hour he had been talking to his three companions, pouring forth a steady stream of knowledge from the inexhaustible reservoir situated between the two upstanding tufts of red hair.

The whole surface of the Pnyx and the little chain of hills of which it forms a part is covered with foundations of houses and other structures cut in the solid rock and with traces of the glorious city that once extended in this direction, and Professor Harkins was evidently as familiar with every rock and every sign of former human industry about him as he was with the streets of the American Leipsic where he made his home.

"It is getting late," observed Miss Jane Schuyler. "I really think we ought to be going back."

"Oh, don't let's leave the spot!" exclaimed Priscilla. "This is such a privilege! As the Professor is talking, I can shut my eyes, and

imagine that the Ancient City has been resurrected from the dust of ages, and that I am walking in one of its streets. I can see you, Jane, like myself, dressed in Ancient costume, while the Professor and Mr. Laselle are attired like Demosthenes and—and—"

For the life of her she could not think of another Greek name.

"Cicero," suggested Mr. Laselle. "They are usually thought of together."

"How can you be frivolous here?" protested Priscilla, "or think of anything that is not Greek? Do think of another Greek name, Professor, which might have been Mr. Laselle's, had he been living in the days which you are describing."

"Mm!" said the Professor, pursing his lips. "We must think of two contemporaries. Let us say, Demosthenes and Philip of Macedon."

"I can't imagine myself either of those," objected Mr. Laselle; "I have it, Harmodius and Aristogiton!"

Priscilla clapped her hands with joy.

"And who shall we be? You must think of some ancient, tall and imposing for Miss Schuy — Ouch! Jane, what do you mean by pinching me?"

"We are talking so much that we do not hear the shepherd's pipe further down the hill."

All turned to look at a flock of sheep, their drab bodies barely distinguishable against the silver slope. The shepherd, in fustanellas and red fez, was standing straight and still as a statue, his hands clasped high about his staff, his cheek resting against them.

"I hear no shepherd's pipe," said Mr. Laselle.

Miss Bates looked wonderingly at Miss Schuyler.

"You were about to betray me to the Professor," whispered the latter.

"Oh, how stupid I am!" groaned Priscilla. "I'll not forget a second time—you'll see that I won't."

For Miss Schuyler had really decided that she could live for awhile at Athens in a modest pension, as Miss Vandervoert, her middle name, without danger of recognition by anybody. There were only two people in the city who knew her, Washington Laselle, the Secretary of the American Legation, and her old friend, Priscilla Bates, and neither of these, she was sure, would betray her.

Herself very wealthy, she had been thrown most among the wealthy, who have become so numerous in America of late as to form a sort of mob, at their various places of sojourn and migration. Few of these, as she knew, visit Athens, except in their yachts, and then they

take guides and carriages and drive to the Acropolis and other points of interest, impelled by a vague sense of duty.

At the Spiti Merlin, the Athenian boarding house most frequented by college people, she could dress simply and pose as a student of something or other, and learn what impression her personality made on her fellows, what feelings she inspired in them, unaided by the glamour of wealth.

She feared that she was becoming mildly insane on the subject of fortune hunters. She knew that she was growing distrustful and cynical.

The small party turned back toward the Acropolis and the road leading to Athens.

"I have shown you," continued the Professor, "that Ancient Athens, like Ancient Rome. lay principally upon a number of small hills. This arrangement, especially in times when sanitation was not as much of a science as it is now, afforded natural drainage for the town; not agreeable, perhaps, for the people lower down, but we will suppose that the wealthier class occupied the higher sites. The Acropolis, as you will observe, was simply one of those hills. Now, before we descend, we will get a clear idea of the position of the modern town. But first, take one parting look at that shepherd, for his attitude suggests an interest-

ing possibility to me. In the Stele commonly supposed to represent Athena, mourning those who fell at Marathon, the pensive pose of the goddess is similar to that of yonder shepherd. It is more than possible that the sculptor may have been inspired by seeing some long dead ancestor of this very shepherd, leaning thus upon his crook."

"Did I not tell you, Jane," whispered Priscilla, awestruck, "that Ancient Greece is all about us, if we would but see it? If I could but once get you to recognize that fact, you would wear the ancient costume at least as long as your feet trod this sacred soil."

"I declare, you are getting to be as enthusiastic about Greece as you were two years ago over the Grail!" laughed Miss Schuyler.

"Tennyson?" asked Laselle.

"Tennyson's Grail," explained Jane. "But Professor Harkins can tell us whether it really exists or not."

"I know nothing at all about the Holy Grail," replied the Professor, with considerable severity. In these days of extreme specializing a scholar is supposed to know only his own branch. If he admits knowledge of any other subject or shows interest in it, he is betraying want of thoroughness in his specialty. 'Talking Shop,' once religiously avoided in good society, is now the fashion. People worth

knowing are not supposed to be able to talk anything else.

"The modern city," persisted the Professor, as the party turned their faces toward home, "forms, as you observe, an almost perfect half moon, filling a depression of the same shape, made by the Hill of the Muses, the Pnyx, the Acropolis, the Observatory Hill on the South and West, and, in a general way, Hymettus, Lycabbettus, and the Slopes of Parnes on the North and East. One horn of the semilune points toward the Attic Plain and New Phaleron, and the other, between Philoppapas and Hymettus, toward Old Phaleron."

The Professor was now talking to Miss Bates alone, as Laselle and Miss Schuyler had fallen some distance behind.

"One would have to go a long distance to find a queerer looking couple than that," observed the Secretary. "Doesn't your friend know that her outlines are not-er-classical? That, in fact, she's dumpy, as Byron says?"

"Dear old Pris!" flared Miss Schuyler, good naturedly. "Don't you dare to make fun of her! I told her so myself, and she admits it, but she says that makes no difference about the costume; that there were dumpy women in Ancient Greece, too, and that they had to wear something."

"Um-er-yes, she certainly is logical there.

Let's get up a match between her and the Professor. He lives so thoroughly in the ancient world that her outlandish get-up must seem quite natural to him."

"Priscilla and the Professor!" laughed Jane. "It has the merit of being alliterative, at all events. It sounds fateful — but no, she'll have a new fad in a year or two, and lose her interest in things Greek. She is likely at a moment's notice to rush off to the ends of the earth and become a Buddhist nun, or — or — a Tingleyite!"

"Since she is capable of such queer things, then, she may even marry the Professor."

Jane shook her head.

"I don't believe Priscilla will ever marry. She has an income of about $2,000 a year — enough to make her independent, and not enough to tempt the fortune hunters. By the way, Wash, the Professor requested me to ask you if your sleep is disturbed by the crowing of roosters, where you lodge?"

"Roosters?"

"Yes, don't laugh. The poor man has been studying too hard it seems, and the roosters crowing all over the city keep him awake. He has changed his room four times now, and he has been here less than two weeks. Since he spoke of it I notice that they can be heard from Spiti Merlin, hundreds of them, some near by and

others far away. I have advised him not to come there."

"What an interesting idea!" commented Mr. Laselle. "We shall doubtless find that the rooster is the sacred bird of Modern Athens. Now that you mention it, I do hear chanticleers crowing all over the place, but they do not keep me awake."

"Professor Harkins says they are worse than the dogs of Constantinople as sleep destroyers."

They had reached the town now, a narrow street consisting mostly of sour-smelling wine shops, cook shops in whose doors dirty boys were frying white bait in rancid oil, coffee houses wherein men were smoking narghiles and talking politics, grocery stores that did a thriving business in barrels of salt fish, goats' cheese, garlic, pickled olives and smoked octapods.

Patrons of these various places were sitting on the sidewalks, drinking bitter wine or Turkish coffee, and the tables and chairs were so numerous that pedestrians found it necessary to take to the middle of the road. A breeze was blowing and the air was milky with a fine, lime-stone dust that filled eyes and nostrils, powdered the leaves of the tiny pepper trees that had not yet been girdled by the omni-

present goat, and drifted into the open barrels and skins of cheese, fish and olives.

"Will the Professor escort Miss Bates out to her dwelling on the mountain this evening?" asked Laselle.

"No, she will stay with me over night," replied Jane.

"Then, in the name of our common Fatherland, allow them to disappear in the distance. As a representative of the dignity of our great and glorious country, I cannot be seen on the streets with such a freak as that. See how the people cross themselves as she passes by."

Their route led by the king's palace, a huge structure whose main building and two wings present a flat front to the hotels on Constitution Square, light drab in color and hideously ugly, until one suddenly thinks of it as an immense Japanese Screen set between Hymettus and the sky, when it becomes picturesque.

A flight of steps led down to the square, where some bootblacks were running round a circular fountain, and the festoons of electric lights shone through the pepper and tall cypress trees.

Laselle detained his companion for a moment at the steps.

"Ah—a part of my dark laid plot," he observed, "to marry off the Professor and your Ancient Greek friend. Let us go down into the square and take an ice."

"I—I suppose I might," hesitated Jane, "though Priscilla is my guest and I ought not to leave her. She stops over night with me whenever she gets belated in town, and I have engaged a room for her. She is the best-natured old thing in the world."

"She who hesitates is lost," said Laselle, taking her firmly by the arm and leading her down the steps.

"Your old masterful ways still cling to you," observed Jane, "and I yield out of habit. I have not been dominated in that way for ten years, since we were children together."

"It's twenty, Jane," corrected Laselle grimly. "You are thirty and I am thirty-two."

"Well, then," said Jane, as they seated themselves at a table in the crowded square, "you have two secrets of mine to keep; my venerable age, and the fact that my name is Schuyler—that I am *the* Miss Schuyler."

"I am about to order a frozen cream for you," said Laselle, as the waiter appeared. "It is a specialty of the place. Waiter, bring a frozen cream and a glass of cognac."

"But I don't want frozen cream," said Jane, "I want chocolate ice."

"The frozen cream is better," calmly replied Laselle, lighting a cigarette and spinning the burning match dexterously into the bushes.

"How delicious this is!" laughed Jane. "It really does take me back ten years."

"Twenty," corrected Laselle, inexorably. "You remember the compact we made when we were engaged to be married—you were ten and I was twelve, that there was always to be the utmost truth between us. How many times have you been engaged since then?"

"Once. He afterwards married another rich woman."

Laselle cast his eye about the square, where fashionably dressed people were strolling up and down.

"Is your frozen cream good?" he asked.

"As you have reminded me of our compact, I am sorry to confess that it is," she replied.

"Better than chocolate ice?"

"Yes."

"That admission must have cost you a good deal. Well, then, there are several very handsome women here tonight, but there is not one more attractive or more worthy to be loved for her own sweetness and merit, than yourself."

"What a dear old friend you are!" said Jane with warmth, "and I know you are sincere, and yet," she sighed, rising, "the very corner stone of our friendship consists in the fact that you never could or would make love to me."

"No," replied Laselle, "for I must have money if I marry. As a friend of mine has aptly put it, speaking of himself, 'I have

money enough for my career if I remain a single man and enough to marry on if I give up my career: but not enough to support the establishment of a married diplomat.' Money is as necessary to a diplomat as it is to a nobleman, he simply must have it. Wealth is the element in which he lives. It is as essential to his existence as water to a fish or air to a bird. There, you see, is where our youthful compact of truth comes in. If you were poor, I couldn't marry you, and being rich, you wouldn't marry me, after the admission that I have just made."

"I shall remain an old maid and do good with my wealth," said Jane. "But what a queer conversation this is! I'm sure I don't know how it started. It's delightful, though, to find that we, though it may have been years since we last met, always fall immediately into the same dear old intimacy."

As they ascended the steps leading up out of the square, a brilliant moon, nearly full, was sailing in a cloudless heaven above the Japanese screen. Not far away Mars burned fiercely red, and in the East, Venus, as large as an orange, glowed like a globe of melted gold.

The street lamps were not lighted, because by full moon they are unnecessary in Athens. Kephyssia street, where lay their road, was a long river of moonlight, and the pepper trees, that fringed its banks, threw sharp, black shadows on the walk.

As they passed the French Legation, a tall, slender young man came out, and saluted Laselle. As he lifted his hat, his cape fell open and disclosed the Order of the Savior gleaming on his shirt front.

"Who is your elegant friend?" asked Jane.

"A title," replied Laselle, "with a human being attached. The lost representative of a family whom fortune long ago deserted. A rare label on an empty bottle. A pretence that is not even a might-have-been. A prince who lost his realm a hundred years before he was born. There doesn't remain to him even an old palace to rent out as a hotel. In fact, that is Prince Nicolas Georgevitch, now military attache of the Austrian legation."

"What an extremely interesting person!" said Jane. "I thought he looked like no ordinary man. You must tell me all about him the very next time you come to see me, which I hope will be soon, and now here is our gate. Good night, Washington. The frozen ice was really delicious."

## CHAPTER V

### *Some Princes and a Few Common Mortals*

THE Professor had invited Miss Bates and Miss Vandervoert, (as the latter was now known,) to visit the Acropolis with him by the light of the May full moon. Fortunately the night was cloudless, and their prospects for seeing this, the greatest and most glorious monument of antiquity, under the best possible circumstances, were excellent. The party were provided with a permit furnished by the Ephor General, and passed without difficulty the guard at the Beule gate. As they ascended the steep steps leading to the Propylaea, Jane glanced at her friend, and the thought occurred to her that Priscilla's costume did not look queer or out of place in those surroundings.

"Miss Bates is the only one of us who is properly dressed for this occasion," remarked Jane to Professor Harkins.

"Thousands of slender maidens in graceful robes and with fillets about their fair brows have mounted this marble stair," replied the Professor, glancing admiringly at Priscilla, who, being fat, was puffing a little as she climbed a difficult place, where the steps were broken. "As I look at her, she seems to be a member of

the Panathenaean procession, flowing like a white majestic river up through the broad gates of the Propylaea. "Tonight," he continued, pausing for a moment at the top of the flight, "We must try to forget the present, and make the past rise from its ruins and its grave, and take shape in all its beauty and glory about us."

The Professor was not of a poetical turn, but even an archaeologist becomes inspired when he visits the Acropolis by moonlight.

"Jane," whispered Priscilla, "if you believed in transmigration of souls, as I do, you would feel that you had been here before, that you had actually taken part in the Panathenaean procession in the days of Pericles and Aspasia."

"Perhaps you were Aspasia," suggested Jane.

"N—no," replied Miss Bates, seriously, "but a wonderful thing is happening to me. I seem to hear the name Calirrhoe. 'Calirrhoe,' as though it were called from a great distance, Jane," she whispered, solemnly, "I believe that the last time I mounted these steps my name was Calirrhoe!"

"Have you been up here before then?" asked Miss Schuyler, who had not been listening too carefully.

"Never before in this present existence," replied her friend.

"Pythagoras believed in the doctrine of Metempsycosis, to which he was converted by

studying the ancient philosophy of Egypt," commented the Professor.

Priscilla glanced at Jane triumphantly.

At the beautiful temple of Nike the Professor stopped for nearly half an hour, explaining the figures of the frieze and reconstructing in imagination the balustrade which has long since disappeared. He talked for the same reason that a river flows, because he was full and could not help discharging, and he was no more of a bore than the river that enriches and fertilizes by its floods, is a bore. He talked also for the joy of talking, because he had stored up all this vast supply of learning with the idea of giving it out, and he was a teacher for the love of teaching; for it is true that there have never been any great teachers without enthusiasm. In fact, there has never been anything great without enthusiasm. Jane was not an archaeologist, but she understood at the first glance that the temple of Nike was more beautiful than anything she had seen in Italy, or Egypt or elsewhere on her travels: that in its absolute simplicity it was the ultimate expression of beauty—beauty that needs no adornment and brooks no challenge. Its simplicity also gave it dignity, making it the worthy shrine of a god.

No one who thinks for himself, who does not make use of those stock phrases which are the expression of "hand-me-down" thoughts, can

look at the Nike Temple and describe its simplicity as "severe." There is no severeness here, for that term is not associated with delight. "Exquisitely simple" is nearer the truth.

"In such buildings as this," said the Professor, "we see the expression of a people who had reached the zenith of the world's artistic development, and who had an unerring instinct for the beautiful. This exquisite little temple now, as you see it restored, is worthy to stand at the threshold of the Parthenon, overlooking the olive groves of Attica, Salamis, and the sea gleaming in the light of yonder glorious moon!"

"Were there priestesses of this temple, Professor?" asked Priscilla, to whom the scene began to look strangely familiar, as illuminated by the magic torch of the Professor's learning.

"The embellishments, where such existed," continued the Doctor, not hearing the question, "were so appropriate as to seem a necessary development of the central idea. For instance, the balustrade, which consisted of slabs of Pentelic marble, was adorned with a series of representations of the Goddess Victory. The one that we know best, 'Victory tying her sandal,' is one of the most exquisite bits in the entire range of art or sculpture, ancient or modern, and gives us a fair idea of what the others must have been, as regards daintiness of design and perfection of execution."

That the Professor regarded his audience of two as more or less popular was evident from the fact that he picked out the spot where Aegus is supposed to have stood, watching for the sail that should bring his son Theseus back from his expedition against the Minotaur. As he told the story, the two ladies moved to the edge and looked over, to see how far the unhappy Aegus fell when he threw himself to destruction on the rocks below.

"My dear young ladies," cried the Professor, "come away from there, come back! Think of the fate of King Aegus!"

Seizing Priscilla by the arm, he pulled her away from the brink of the precipice, and Jane smiled, thinking how much Laselle would have enjoyed the little scene, and wondering if there could be anything in his whimsical prophesy. She was beginning to understand how a woman of sufficient intelligence might be attracted to the Professor, despite his big nose and upstanding tufts of red hair, but could he ever become deeply interested in Priscilla?

As they passed through the magnificent and once splendid Propylaea, Dr. Harkins continued to talk, proving most interesting in his conjectures as to the pictures that probably hung in the Pinacotheke or ancient art gallery at the left.

When he came out upon the hill proper, however, he became silent and removed his hat.

The entire surface of the Acropolis was bathed in brilliant moonlight in which the marble temples and ruins gleamed weird and majestic: the Parthenon, unrivalled temple of an unrivalled goddess, more splendid, after twenty-five centuries of desolation and desecration than all the mosques, and churches and temples of all the religions that the earth has known; and, farther away, home of the Ancient Mysteries, the Erechteum, and Porch of the Maidens, who stood there looking toward Salamis and the sea when Athens was the world's metropolis; who stood there while the Panathenaic festivals foamed about their feet, graceful and solemn; who could tell, could they speak, what wild, wondering folk visited the place during the long ages of darkness, or what barbarous hordes pulled down the gold and ivory statue erected by Phidias.

Such thoughts as these, and many others, suggested by the place and the hour, were passing through the scholar's mind, when Jane remarked:

"By this light, it resembles a cemetery."

"And that's exactly what it is," sighed the Professor, "These marble ruins are the monuments of great men, dead long ago, or rather, of great years and great ideals, that can never again return to the earth."

"I must confess, though," said Jane, "that my thought was not quite so deep. I meant that

all these broken blocks of white marble, scattered about in such profusion, actually remind one of a cemetery. I do not know whether the effect would be the same by day, but now one seems to be in a graveyard, with the moonlight shining on innumerable tomb-stones."

It is probable that many other people, on visiting the Acropolis by moonlight, have been impressed as Miss Schuyler was, for the space in front and at the left of the Parthenon is thickly strewn with an immense number of fragments of pure Pentelic that, in the uncertain light of the moon, are more suggestive of a cemetery than of any other sight with which the modern eye is familiar.

The two women now turned their steps towards the Parthenon, obeying a common impulse to enter the imposing ruin. They had not gone far, however, before they noticed that their learned escort was not with them, but that, as though entirely forgetful of their presence, he was wandering off in the direction of the Erechtheum.

"Let us go with him," whispered Priscilla. "He may talk some more, and we ought not to miss a word. Jane, he is a wonderful man!"

They accordingly rejoined the Professor, and followed him, threading their way through drums of huge columns, broken capitals of massive stone beams, and other fragments of marble,

white and pure and unreal in the moonlight, and resembling masses of snow that might melt away and disappear under the fierce sun of the coming morrow.

But the Professor did not talk. It seems that he had suddenly remembered some detail regarding a bit of old Pelasgian wall that had been uncovered by excavations, and with the published description of which he was not quite satisfied, and he was now pacing to and fro, gazing down into a deep trench.

Having no conception of what he was doing, or the cause of his interest, the two women turned back to the Caryatides, and stood for a long time gazing at them.

Jane was impressed by their majesty and the nobility of their forms, and was sufficiently familiar with the principles of true art, which receives its inspiration in nature, to see the resemblance between these figures and the deep-chested, erect Italian peasants of today who carry baskets or jars upon their heads. The naturalness and grace of the drapery also caught her feminine eye, and she called the attention of Miss Bates to this point.

"I was just noticing the drapery myself," replied Priscilla, "and was comparing it with my own. I wonder if Pauline studied these figures before designing our costume? I must ask her."

"Who is Pauline?" asked Jane.

"Miss Doolittle, the founder of our colony. And Jane, do you not notice that the Ancient Greek women, the ideal women, that is to say, were not slender, after all. According to these —these statues, my figure is more nearly classic than yours?" Jane put her arm about her friend's soft and generous waist.

"Of course it is," she laughed, "and I believe the Professor would sustain you in that contention."

At this moment a party of American tourists approached, three women and two men, preceded by a guide, the latter hurrying them over the ground rapidly, in order to earn his money as quickly as possible. He was pointing here and there, and talking dragoman English at the top of his voice.

"I don't think much of the Acropolis as a building," said one of the women, "it isn't half as big as the Colosseum."

"They told us at the gate that one of the Princes was coming up," said another, "Didn't you hear what the guide said, Mrs. Clark? I'm not going down till he shows up. We could see him just fine by this moonlight. What relation is this Prince to the King of Italy, Andrea?"

"Niece," replied the guide, volubly. "Son of King George, cousin of the Czar of Russia, brother-by-law of the Emperor of Allemagne,

and parent of all the crowned foreheads of Europa. "These ladies," he continued, pointat the Porch of the Maidens, "are the Caryatides."

"Carry who?" asked the younger of the two men, the would-be wit of the party.

"Caryatides. They are by Phidias' own hand, made by order from Pericles, with Aspasia for model. All but one, who was distressfully robbed by Sir Elgin in 1763, and hole filled up by false figure, which turned black, as you see, thus revealing his fearful guilt. He sold him for £10,000 to King of England and he is now set up in Westminster Castle."

Here the guide, who had delivered this lingo in one breath, and as though it were all one word, paused suddenly because his lungs were exhausted, and started for a new object of interest.

"Hold on, Spaghetti, stop a minute," cried the older of the two men, a thin-faced, sharpeyed little man, with grey closely cropped whiskers.

"Yes," said Mrs. Clark, "I want to know the name of the Prince."

"Oh, bother the Prince!" snapped Mr. Clark. "Who is the owner of these statues? Or, if nobody owns them, who runs this show?"

"Runs this show?" repeated the guide, helplessly.

"Yes. Who is the manager of this whole Paragon-Acropolis business, including the six Carry sisters?"

"Parthenon, Pa," corrected his daughter.

"All right, all right, Sue," grumbled Mr. Clark, who sometimes regretted that he had ever sent his daughter to a finishing school. "That's neither here nor there. The name's of no importance. There ain't ten successful business men in America who know the difference between Paragon and Parthenon."

"For billets of admission, apply to Ephor General," parroted the guide.

"The Ephor General, eh? Say, Frank," to his prospective son-in-law, "the women of those days were built like Dutch scows — like sourkrout barrels. They can't compare with present day women, properly held in shape by Clark's Beauty Corset. Idea for an ad. See Ephor-General and get permit to take down that black figger and replace her with modern, up-to-date woman, elegant figger, Paris gown, etc., all in best marble, and have engraved on block she stands on 'I wear Clark's Beauty Corset' eh? He'll jump at it, because it'll be a fine thing, a real work of art, and that black female is a disgrace to the place. Why didn't you think of that? If you are going into business with me, you mustn't let any chance for a good ad. get away from you."

Attracted by the sound of Mr. Clark's voice, the Professor had approached, and now stood listening, and he muttered, as the party moved on, led by the impatient guide:

"Ass, inconceivable ass! Oh, I beg your pardon, ladies, I—I meant quadruped!"

Jane burst out laughing.

"Don't change your expression on my account, Professor," she said, "why insult the other quadrupeds?"

But his Royal Highness, Prince Julien, had already arrived, and with him a merry party, including a beautiful Russian Princess, tall and blonde, several secretaries of legation, and Prince Nicolas Georgevitch. The gentlemen were in evening dress and high hats, and the ladies decoleté, protected by opera cloaks from the cool winds which always blow upon the Acropolis. As they were walking rapidly over the place, they passed quite close to the Professor and his little party.

Priscilla's costume excited the interest of the Russian princess greatly, and she asked many questions concerning it, and the little colony of Ancient Greeks living on the slopes of Hymettus, which Georgevitch and one of the young diplomats were able to answer more or less fully.

Georgevitch looked sharply at Jane, and recognized her perfectly, in the brilliant, white

moonlight, as the lady whom he had seen a few evenings before on Kephyssia street with Laselle. He had not as yet received a reply to his letter to his friend, the Austrian Consul at Philadelphia, nor the photograph which he so much desired. He already knew, however, through enquiries made by his valet at the Spiti Merlin that the lady called herself Jane Vandervoert, and a vague suspicion was stirring in his mind; where was the rich, the fabulously wealthy Miss Schuyler, of whom he had learned at the legation ball? Strange that she should be in town and no trace of her could be found, even though the most thorough search had been made. Did members of great American families sometimes possess several names?

In the meantime the Princely party had entered the Parthenon, and were standing about among the tall columns, whose white shafts were pale as giant ghosts in the vivid, streaming moonlight.

The solemnity of the most sacred spot on earth, save the tomb of Christ, oppressed the party for a moment, and they were silent, until one of the secretaries, a huge favorite with royalty on account of his ingenuity and versatility in amusing it, proposed:

"Would not a cake walk here in the Parthenon be a novel idea, your royal Highness?"

"Capital! Capital!" cried Prince Julien. "It would be historical, would mark an epoch in the annals of the building, and Van Schreimer's name would go thundering down through the ages side by side with that of the German lieutenant who blew up the place. Van Schreimer, give us a cake walk."

"But I did not expect to perform, Your Royal Highness, surely, to originate such a brilliant idea is all that could be expected of me in one evening?"

"Nevertheless," persisted his Royal Highness, "you are the most accomplished cake-walker in the diplomatic corps. We all remember your performance at the Turkish legation. And, by the way, Miss Carayanne assisted you. Miss Carayanne and Count Van Schreimer will give us the cake walk."

A request by Royalty is a command, and the couple named laid aside their wraps and forthwith began to execute a cake walk, while another Secretary, also anxious to be found amusing, whistled the necessary rag-time.

Count Van Schreimer was a short, blonde young man, partly bald, with imperial moustache, and sufficiently agile, despite his prominent stomach.

Miss Carayanne was a tall, willowy Greek, dark and extremely handsome, and the fact that she was being watched by Royal eyes

caused her to enter into the spirit of the dance with the abandon of a Maenad.

While this extraordinary scene was being enacted, the Clark party was watching, silently hidden in the black shadow of an overthrown capital; the two men amused by the dance, the women devouring royalty with insatiable eyes, beseeching the guide in hoarse whispers for information of every nature concerning the specimens which they now saw before them. Mrs. Clark, indeed, frequently measured the distance between herself and the prince and princess with a calculating glance, that she might be able to boast afterward how many yards she had actually stood from royalty on this memorable night.

But Van Schreimer was not to have a monopoly of the clever ideas this evening. While he was engaged in the dance, his corpulent stomach thrust forward as far as possible, his cane held before him perpendicularly in true darky style, as he supposed, his tall silk hat inclining backwards at an angle of forty-five degrees, the busy brain of Georgevitch was at work.

PROPERTY

## CHAPTER VI

*Prince Georgevitch Has an Idea*

VANDERVOERT was an aristocratic name, he mused, despite the fact that its possessor was a student of something or other. Besides, she had been walking, when he first saw her, with Laselle, who, though an American, was a diplomat of years' standing, and very particular as to whom he strolled through the streets with publicly.

A teacher must necessarily be poor, but then, as he too well knew, one could be an aristocrat and not rich. This Miss Vandervoert would very probably know of the whereabouts of Miss Schuyler.

"I have an idea, Your Royal Highness," he said, turning to the Princess, "which seems to me as good as Van Schreimer's."

"What! more ideas!" exclaimed the Prince, "the atmosphere of the place is evidently inspiring in its effects. Let us hear your alleged idea."

"The lady in the classic drapery, not one of the Caryatides, but the flesh and blood woman, is an American, and of course could give us the real cake walk if she chose. Should Your Royal Highness command her, she could not refuse.

Miss Carayanne's performance is unapproachable, but she is physically not well mated with Van Schreimer. Now the lady over yonder and Van Schreimer are just of a build, they would make a perfect team."

"Venus and Adonis," suggested the Princess, and all who heard her were enormously amused. Royal humor has a peculiarly fetching quality, and murmurs of "exquisite!" "How delicious!" were heard from all quarters.

Georgevitch bowed low, with his hand over his heart.

"I am charmed that my poor idea is finding favor," he said. "If I could now have the honor of acting as Your Royal Highness' page," he continued, "to express Your Royal Highness' interest in the costume so gracefully worn by the lady whom we saw, I could undertake to bring the party here, and the command to give us the true cake walk could follow as a matter of course. Now I submit that the cake walk, executed by an American on the Acropolis, in the costume of Aspasia, would be something premiere vue."

"Delicious, delicious!" cried the Princess, clapping her little hands approvingly. "Go and bring them immediately."

Georgevitch and Her Highness spoke English together. This is the favorite tongue of European royalty, which they use when talking with each other, and Georgevitch, though he

spoke English but indifferently, could not forego so harmless an opportunity of asserting his royal lineage.

Georgevitch set out upon his mission. He found the Professor with Jane and Priscilla leaning over the wall of the small, circular belvidere at the east end of the Acropolis, looking down at the city, on whose tiled roofs the moonlight lay like snow, and through the length of whose streets it poured dazzlingly, where little black men strolled about and were seen so distinctly that one fancied they would reply, if addressed in an ordinary tone of voice.

"Pardon me," he said, lifting his hat and bowing with infinite politeness, "a thousand pardons. I am Prince Nicolas Georgevitch. I appear before you at the Command of Royalty. Her Royal Highness has been greatly impressed at the seeing in these surroundings, an Ancient Greek." He bowed again in the direction of Priscilla. "She commands me to say that she would be pleased at conversing with the lady who wears so gracefully the costume of the days of Pericles. I am, in fact, charged to invite yourself and friends to join the Royal party."

The Professor glanced admiringly at Priscilla.

"I am Professor Harkins," he said. "Professor Goodwin Harkins, of Connecticut. Allow me to present to you Miss Vandervoert and Miss Bates."

The Prince bowed and smiled: one bow and one smile for each of his new acquaintances.

"I am charmed," he murmured. "It is always a special pleasure to meet Americans. And shall we be going immediately?"

On the way he managed to walk with Jane, with whom he entered into conversation with well-bred ease.

"Perhaps," suggested Priscilla to the Professor, "the Princess is thinking of joining our colony, or at least of adopting the ancient Greek costume. What a victory that would be! Thousands would follow her example immediately. She no doubt also believes in transmigration of souls. I wonder which of the Ancient Greeks she believes herself to have been?"

They arrived at the East end of the Parthenon and climbed up the few high steps leading to a level with the main sanctuary, and there, in the blaze of the old, gigantic moon, in the holy of holies of the Virgin Goddess, among the sublime yet exquisite columns of her temple, whose ruins are more beautiful than the perfection of any other structure that is, or ever was, Count Van Schreimer and Miss Carayanne were responding to an encore of the cake walk.

The Professor stopped, aghast. If there had ever been a suggestion of comicality in his upstanding tufts of red hair, and large nose, it

was not perceptible now. A flush of shame could be seen upon his cheeks, and his eye glowed angrily.

"What are they doing — those two?" he asked, sternly.

"They are dancing the American cake walk," replied Georgevitch, wonderingly. "What is the matter? Are they not doing it well? They are doing their possible."

"Tell their Royal Highnesses," replied the Professor, with dignity, "that a sudden indisposition prevents my attending upon them. That I am, in fact, sick and must go home. Miss Bates, allow me to help you down the steps."

He spoke and acted with such authority that Miss Bates yielded, and Jane followed, as best she might.

As they passed the great capital in whose shadow the corset maker's party was hiding, Mrs. Clark whispered.

"Hist! Hist! how close did you get to the Princess? What is the color of the feather in her hat?"

But the Professor paid no heed. He walked so fast that his two companions had difficulty in keeping up with him.

At last they seized him, each by an arm.

"What is the matter?" they inquired in concert. "Do you feel faint? Can we do anything for you?"

"Perhaps it is want of sleep on account of the roosters," suggested Priscilla. "You must find a quiet room. How can you use your brain all day and lie awake all night? There must be a house somewhere in Athens where the crowing of roosters cannot be heard, if one could only find it!"

He stopped and look at them both wonderingly.

"Do you not also feel faint?" he asked, adding, with horror in his voice, "the cake-walk, in the Parthenon!"

"It was disgusting," said Jane, soothingly. "But it did not actually make me ill, because I am hardened. I have attended monkey and dog dinners of the New York '400.' "

Prince Georgevitch stood gazing at the three retreating forms until they disappeared around the end of the building.

"That is certainly an original American," he murmured, thinking of the Professor. "I have never known one to be taken ill before when summoned by Royalty. In fact, such a summons would cause the ordinary American, though dead, to rise again. And this Miss Vandervoert, Miss Jane Vandervoert, is what the English call a thoroughbred."

Then he rejoined the Royal party to report the failure of his mission.

## CHAPTER VII

### *Prince Georgevitch Makes a Discovery*

PRINCE Nicholas Georgevitch sat in the small dining room of his apartment on the Hodos Solonos, smoking a cigarette and sipping his breakfast coffee. By the side of his plate lay a pile of invitations, which he was opening one by one, deciding as he glanced at them whether he could or would accept them or not. He was in great demand in the society of the small Capital, where "diplomatitis," as it has been wittily called, in an acute form, is always present. The fact that he was connected with a legation would have secured his admission to the higher circles, had he possessed no other quality; that he was a favorite at court placed him indisputably among the "52," the creme de la creme of Athens society, that inner circle from which all are excluded who have not danced with Royalty. In addition, his distinguished and elegant manners, his title, albeit empty, and the mysterious air of melancholy that surrounded him, would have rendered him a persona grata in high circles anywhere.

He was at present attired in a dark blue dressing gown and slippers, and his complexion, more sallow than its wont, bore testimony to

the late hour at which he had retired the evening before, or, rather, this morning.

As he glanced at the invitations, some of them for functions a month distant in point of time, he consulted a tiny calendar to see if the date were already occupied.

"The Countess Frascati," he mused, "hm. The Princes never go there, and I am down for three houses on the tenth. I will make a note of her, though, and drop in late, if the Princes leave the Von Alutius Cotillon early. The Baron Duca's. Why did they have it on the 12th? I must work in an hour for it, though, as it bids fair to outrival in prodigality all their former crushes. It will be their last, too, as the minister has complained that his third secretary entertains more lavishly than he can afford to himself, and has had him transferred. Mr. and Mrs. Von Lippen-Bridge and Beer: people who expect to be invited everywhere, and repay as cheaply as possible, I know of no reason why I should allow them to bore me. The Turkish Minister, classic tableau, arranged by Herr Steinbock, of the German School. Her Royal Highness—I must cut out the musicale at the Wissners and attend this."

While he was thus agreeably engaged, his man entered and laid on the table noiselessly a packet of foreign letters, tied together tightly with a piece of cord. Among these was an

epistle from the Austrian Consul at Philadelphia, containing, as an enclosure, the portrait of a woman in evening dress.

Georgevitch studied the picture for a few moments wonderingly, then read the letter, which said, among other things:

"She is well connected, from an American point of view, on both her father's and her mother's side. Her money was made in wheat speculation and railroads, and her full name is Jane Vandervoert Schuyler. She moves in the highest circles here, and her hand has been sought frequently in marriage, for the most part by titled foreigners. It is rumored that she has determined never to marry for a peculiar reason. In the first place she is that rara avis among rich American women, an intense patriot, and incapable of cold-bloodedly buying a title, as nearly all of them do who have money enough. She seems to be possessed also of a sort of obsession, the fear that some designing person will marry her for her money, a thing which she intends to prevent if possible. All this I know, partly from observation, and partly from the confidences of a mutual friend. She has a brother who is a black sheep, a hairbrained spendthrift, addicted to gambling. The money was all left to her, with a provision that she give him as much as she thinks good for him. The man who wins her will get a cool ten million

with her, 50,000,000 francs, but I cannot offer you much encouragement, shrewd as you are, unless there is some way that you can make her think that you believe her to be a poor girl, and that you are willing to give up everything for her. I enclose her photograph, obtained from the mutual friend, who would willingly further any scheme to get Miss Schuyler married. All women are, by nature, you know, matchmakers, and this friend actually believes that "Jane," as she calls her, would be happier married. So much for your questions. Now, my dear fellow — "

Georgevitch laid down the letter and picked up the photo again.

As he gazed at the high-bred, strong face, the honest, though wistful eyes that seemed to look fearlessly into his own, at the mass of soft hair that rippled about the broad forehead, at the deep, swelling breast and the beautifully rounded neck, the light of certainty dawned upon his face, and he whistled softly a few bars from Rigoletto, a habit of his when thinking deeply. Then he walked to the window and looked down into the unattractive street. An itinerant green grocery man, whose stock was loaded in huge baskets slung on a donkey's back, gazed up at him and asked anxiously if he wished to buy any garlic or wild succory, then faced about to cross himself while the funeral of

an old woman passed by, the head of the exposed body rolling horribly on a black cushion.

Georgevitch could not think there, so he took several turns about the room, and resumed whistling, softly, his hands clasped behind his back.

The result of his meditations was to the effect that Miss Schuyler had been sent to Athens incognito by Providence that her vast wealth might be diverted to the purpose of rebuilding the fortunes of his ancient and princely line. True, he never could become a reigning prince again, as his fathers had been, but he had in mind a vast estate in Croatia and an ancient palace that had once belonged to his family. With 50,000,000 francs at his command he could buy the estate, rebuild the palace, live as a prince and reign as a real prince over his peasants.

He must make the woman believe that he loved her before she even suspected that he knew who she really was. This was his one chance, the opportunity that comes to a man once in a life time, and he must make sure of it.

He believed that Providence had sent this opportunity because he was a devout Catholic, and superstitious in matters that pertained to the destinies of his house, whose last living representative he was.

He had had chances to marry wealthy women before, but never one with so vast a fortune as this, and there had always been something distasteful to him in the women themselves.

This American would do, and the idea occurred to him that, if he really could fall in love with her, or make himself think as much, the state of mind would make his wooing the more convincing.

He lighted a cigarette, threw himself into an arm chair, and fell to thinking so profoundly that he forgot even to whistle.

## CHAPTER VIII

### *And Begins a Campaign*

TOWARD the end of May the weather begins to grow hot in Athens, and the languor of the East creeps into the air. In June the monotonous lullaby of the cicadas is heard in the olive trees, and the grass is already burned white as with fire upon the dark-red hillsides, and amorous drowsiness spreads its wings over the land through all the long afternoons.

The water in the town grows scarcer and scarcer, and the dust, as fine and almost as irritating to the nostrils as insect powder, deeper and deeper. This is the time when all, who are in a position to do so, flit away, some never to come back again, others to return the first of November.

Priscilla still found her room in the shepherd's cottage, out on the first upward incline of Hymettus, very pleasant. The great platain tree in the "mandra," or yard, furnished shade during the entire day, and here she loved to sit, reading in a rocking chair The hard earth floor of the mandra was as smooth and level as cement. Nor did she lack of companionship, for Doolittle had returned from Germany, where he had been giving classic dances, and was grazing

a flock of goats in the neighborhood. He, too, wore ancient costume and had learned to play a pipe. He was in love with a shepherd girl whose herd roamed the same slopes, and he imagined that her form and features were classical. He had decided, if he married her, to dress her in classic attire. That should be one of the terms of the sacred compact. She was an Ancient Greek, but did not know it. He longed to mingle his flock with hers, and charm her with his pipe, sitting together under the shade of some tree mentioned by Theocritus, but unfortunately the modern Greek father and brothers, a sturdy tribe, did not approve a style of wooing of which they had never heard.

There was also Miss Holdane de Higgins, a belle of several Newport seasons, who believed herself a reincarnation of Elpinice, Cimon's sister, the strong-minded lady who used to shock the ancient Athenians by going about the streets of Athens unattended, and who caused herself to be talked about by serving as model for the painter Polygnotus.

Miss de Higgins was a very tall young woman with a flat chest and a thin intense face, not unlike that of Burnes-Jones' Sappho.

She professed the most advanced ideas as to matrimony, love and the relations of the sexes, and did not hesitate to air her shocking theories on any occasion, or in any company. She resid-

ed at the expensive and luxurious Actaeon Hotel, at Phaleron, but she had adopted the ancient costume, and was fond of long walks, often visiting Priscilla and the other members of the Doolittle colony. She was usually attended by a handsome and impecunious Greek who wrote incomprehensible verses, and gave equally incomprehensible lectures in the parlors of a rich old maid of Athens—a Russian Philhellene. Until the advent of Miss de Higgins he had been regarded as a harmless lunatic by his fellow townsmen, but they now began to see method in his madness, for by his eccentricities he was like to capture the American heiress, who believed him to be an Ancient Greek philosopher.

Jane also lingered on. She had intended to leave Athens as soon as the weather became uncomfortable and take a trip to Alaska with some New York friends. But she began to find that a tropical country during the heated season possesses attractions of which those who fly away in the early days of summer do not dream.

The fierce white blaze and glare of the sun awake feelings akin to those of the Fire-worshipper. One does not doubt that some remote ancestor dwelt amid the sands of Egypt or on the plains of Babylon, and worshipped gods akin to Apollo and Agni.

One learns to revel in the sun, as a lizard on a rock, to absorb it. Besides, it is only in the

summer of a tropic land that one comes to know the beauty of water, the cool soft touch of it, falling on the hand or the brow like the long soft hair of a woman; the sweetness of its voice as it plashes among the grass and lilies and fern and cress that fringe the irrigating ditch.

The deliciousness of shade, too, as an exquisite and delicate pleasure, an epicurean ravishment, penetrating like a faint perfume the inmost recesses of the soul, can only be realized by the children of the sun. The shade is refreshing, but it does not stimulate sufficiently for tiresome work, or even for thought. One has thought and perhaps worked a little during the early morning, and now, if the time be after lunch, the scented cigarette drops from between relaxing fingers, and one feels a deep, unutterable contentment stealing over him. He is not quite asleep, yet he dreams. This is the real siesta, the Nirvana of the sun-saturated Hindoo.

If one has a garden shaded with plane, cypress and pepper trees, he does not wish to leave it early in the summer, and later he becomes too indolent to make the effort.

This was not quite Jane's experience yet, though she was beginning to realize the charms of a tropic city in the hot season—for Athens is a tropic city during four months of the year, despite its latitude.

The reflection that she was soon to lose sight of Priscilla for she did not know how long, led

to her passing much of her time at the shepherd's cottage, and the two took long walks together on the slopes of Hymettus.

There a delicate, soft breeze always blew, exhilarating as champagne, mingled with the breath of thyme that covered the vast slopes of Hymettus and Parnes.

When they returned to the cottage Jane's shoes, and the bare, scratched legs and sandals of Priscilla were fragrant with the pungent and agreeable thyme.

Often Spiro, the young shepherd who brought goat's milk into Athens every day on a donkey, and who lived in a hut thatched with reeds up near the spring and monastery of Kaisariane, met them on the road. When returning from town, he would be sitting astride his animal, just over the hind legs, his own toes almost touching the ground. He always smiled, showing two rows of white, perfect teeth, and touched with the grace of a courtier the red handkerchief tied about his head.

"How beautiful that shepherd is!" exclaimed Priscilla one day, "his regular Greek features, and his short curly hair remind me of the Hermes by Praxiteles."

"Perhaps," suggested Miss Schuyler, slyly, "he is a reincarnation of Hermes."

"In a way, yes," replied Priscilla, undaunted, "he is undoubtedly the reincarnation of some

beautiful Greek who suggested the Hermes to Praxiteles."

"You do not believe that Hermes really existed then?" asked Jane.

"How do I know?" replied Priscilla. "I believe in everything. It is so much easier to believe than to doubt, and one is so much happier!"

They were on their way to Kaisariane, an excursion which they had long promised themselves, carrying their luncheon in paper parcels.

"What has become of the Professor?" asked Jane as the two sat down under an olive, planted half a century ago, by priestly hands long mingled with the dust. "Mr. Laselle and I were in hopes that a pretty little romance was springing up between Dr. Harkins and yourself—that one whom no modern woman had been able to captivate had at length yielded to the charms of an Ancient Greek."

"Jane," said Priscilla, clasping her knees in her hands, and gazing sentimentally into her friend's eyes, "you would not speak thus to me if you knew my—my heart story. If you knew that I am engaged."

"You dear old Pris!" cried Jane, hugging her, and kissing her on the soft, wind-reddened cheek. "I thought so! and of course it's the Professor. I congratulate you! He's as good as gold and a really great man."

"I know it," admitted Priscilla, "but it is not he, and indeed, I cannot encourage him. It's Abner!"

"Abner?"

"Yes, Abner Hale, of West Haddam. We have been engaged for twenty years, but we cannot marry because Abner's mother does not like me. She thinks I am extravagant and, besides, he is poor and must take care of her. So we must wait until Providence sets us free. Not that I want her to die," she explained; "such a wicked thought has never entered my head."

"How old is Mrs. Hale?" asked Jane.

"She was sixty-two when we were engaged. She must be over eighty now."

"She may live twenty years yet," remarked Jane.

"She shan't outlive me," said Priscilla, also rising, and there was a hard look on her face that her friend had never seen there before.

"How often do you hear from Abner?" asked Jane, as they followed the rocky path that winds up through the olive trees to the little plateau on which the ancient monastery stands.

"Twice a year," replied Priscilla. "He always writes on Christmas day and the Fourth of July. But here is the monastery."

Coming around a turn in the path, they found themselves suddenly face to face with a picturesque ruin, several hundred years old, its walls

stained with time and moisture, save when here and there green moss grew in the crevices or overran the stones.

Before the mediaeval gate, through which of old caravans of mules and horses had passed into the court yard, stood several giant platain trees, with marble seats under them, the very seats where the holy fathers were wont to sit in reverent contemplation, after a hearty noon-day meal, or smack their lips over bits of gossip, as rare and racy as their wine.

At the left of the gate flows a spring, celebrated among the ancients for the potency of its waters to aid childless women. Today it bubbles a grateful welcome to all who arrive at the monastery after a long and arduous walk.

As Jane and Priscilla stood looking at the clear fountain, and regretting that they had not brought a cup with them, Professor Harkins came out of the court with a glass in his hand.

"Ah, Miss Bates!" he cried, his face lighting with joy, "this is indeed an unexpected pleasure! And Miss Vandervoert—ah, yes, a pleasure!"

"How in the world did you ever happen to come out here?" asked Priscilla.

"That charming gentleman, Prince Georgevitch, came out with me. He has been very agreeable to me, of late, and I have seen much of him. He came this morning and proposed

the trip to me, as he said there were some old columns and bits of an ancient building here, which might have been a temple of Aphrodite. I have found nothing of the kind, but I did see a mound, en route, which I veritably believe is a beehive tomb, and which, if I had time and funds, I should like to excavate. This spring was celebrated among the ancients. It is mentioned by Suidas and the Latin poet Ovid, and was formerly called Kyllou Pera."

"What was it famous for?" asked Jane of the learned man, who had now assumed his professional attitude and tone of voice.

"For—for its life-giving properties," he stammered, turning suddenly red. "May I offer you a drink, young ladies?" and stopping, he brought up a brimming tumbler of the cold, delicious water.

As the two entered the shady court, Jane wondered somewhat, as she followed her friend and the Professor, at the Prince's sudden liking for the learned American. That it had anything to do with herself, she did not for the moment imagine.

"Today," for instance, she mused, "he could have had no idea that we were coming out here."

She did not of course know that Georgevitch's faithful man Elias had been on her trail for days past, and had learned last night through a friend of his, the butler of the Spiti Merlin, of the contemplated trip to Kaisariane.

As they stood now looking at the ruined cloisters, and the grass-grown stairway leading up to the quarters and the little square garden of the old-time Hegoumenoi or Fathers Superior, the Prince himself came out of the inner court which served as a flower garden for the monks, and which is walled in by the church on one side, and the long dining hall on the other.

## CHAPTER IX

*When Kingdoms Are at Stake, Lives are Cheap*

IN a small room of a one-story and basement house on Dyonisus Street, a poor thoroughfare high up on the northern slope of the Acropolis, the Tarachian committee was in session. The room, which was carpetless, was furnished with about twenty chairs of which at least half were now occupied by members of the society. The President was a heavily built man, with a dark face as round as the full moon, sparse moustache and whiskers of the mongolian type. His large, restless black eyes were of that unnatural brightness which is seen in the eyes of megalomaniacs, egomaniacs, and of those mad dreamers in general who imagine that they are responsible for the future of the human race and that the destinies of nations are in their hands.

On one of the walls, in plain view of all, hung a map of the Province of Tarachia, which, at a slight distance, seemed to be suffering from a violent attack of some eruptive disease, possibly smallpox. Closer examination proved that it was thickly sewn with red dots, indicating Greek schools and churches, and more thinly with blue, at the places where Bulgarian such were admittedly located.

A bust of the poet Hesiod stood on a pedestal near the President's desk.

The President himself was talking to the members, fiercely, voicing sentiments with which they were all in accord, yet glaring at them as though they were idiots who dared to disagree with him.

"Was Hesiod a Greek, or was he not?" he demanded. "Perhaps you would have the temerity, perhaps someone here would have the madness to affirm that he was a Bulgarian? If there be any such here, if there exists on the face of the earth a man so ignorant, then we can expect to find a human being capable of saying with sincerity that Tarachia is today inhabited by Bulgarians. With sincerity, I repeat, for those who do say as much are either our enemies, who have their own interest in view, and support it by the help of the Father of Falsehoods, or else they are traitors, traitors to the glorious cause for which we are ready to fight and die. I have to report today that my letter, on behalf of the Society to the Czar of Russia, has not yet been answered. Neither has my communication to the Emperor of Germany. And why do these cringing despots not reply? Because they do not dare! There is a reply to my note to Lord Salisbury, enclosing several copies of my pamphlet proving that Hesiod, the Father of Greek poetry, was a Tarachian, and that there-

fore Tarachia is and always has been, a Greek province." Mr. Demetracopoulos, read the reply of Lord Salisbury.

The Secretary, a pale, underfed, threadbare young man, with a hectic flush in his thin cheeks, rose with the letter in his hand. There was a shuffling of feet, and the members all leaned forward in keen expectancy.

"To G. Vourouclas, Esquire,
President of the Tarachian Committee,
Athens.

Sir:

Lord Salisbury bids me thank you for sending him your pamphlet, and to say that he expects great pleasure from looking it over, which he promises to do at the earliest possible moment.

Yours with much respect,
Walsh, Secretary."

"Lord Salisbury is today the greatest man in Europe," shouted the President. "With him on our side, with England and its allies on our side, we can bid defiance to the rest of the world. Do I voice the sentiments of this meeting, or do I not?"

"Mr. President," said a young member, rising: a slender member, with a thin, pure Greek face, save that the nose suggested a slight

admixture of Turkish blood at some time in the history of his descent; a member with large chestnut, levantine eyes, blonde hair and moustache, and reddish beard, cut square. He also talked fast and fierce, as those do who feel their subject burn within them. "It is the object of this honorable body that Tarachia should be united to the mother country. To that end I have given my time, my substance and the blood that was dearest to me, for my brother, as is known to you all, fell in the mountains of Tarachia, fighting for faith and fatherland. I would gladly myself die for this object." There was no doubt that the speaker felt what he said, which is the secret of all real oratory. His hearers were evidently moved, with the exception of the President, who felt that he had for the moment ceased to be the centre of interest, and was licking his lips nervously as he watched for the slightest pause, that he might leap in and again hold the floor. But the words of the other poured out in a torrent. "I glory in my brother's death," he said. "It is the greatest honor that has ever been reaped by a family that is by no means destitute of distinction. I envy him his death and would gladly myself lay down my life for the same cause, falling for faith and fatherland. That cause, as I said before, mark me, that cause, is the Union of Tarachia with the mother country."

"Bravo! Bravo!" cried several of the audience.

"I rise to tell you that our sacred cause now runs the greatest danger of shipwreck. One of our secret agents, a servant at the Italian legation, overheard a conversation between the ministers of the Great Powers. My friends, it has been decided to erect Tarachia into a principality, and the ruler has already been picked out. Who do you think it is? Who, I say?"

As he asked this question the speaker advanced to the front of the room, and shook his clenched fist in the air.

"Prince George of Greece?" asked one.

"The Duke d'Abruzzi?" another.

"Would to God it were any such exalted and respectable personage! No! a tin can, a bladder. A zero. You will find it difficult to believe me when I tell you that it is Mr. Nicolas Georgevitch, the Servian, who calls himself an Austrian and a Prince. Georgevitch, the nondescript, the pauper, the adventurer."

The speaker was shaking with rage, and his face was white with hate.

His audience commenced talking all together.

"I see the finger of Russia in this!" cried one.

"What has Russia to do with it? Austria, rather," another.

"Panslavism," shouted another, "and the

finger of France for she is Russia's great ally."

The President pounded on the desk until silence was at last secured.

"Is this report well verified?" he asked, assuming his most deliberative air. "Is the spy who overheard the conversation here?"

The speaker on the floor turned toward one of the seated members, nodded, and the perfect waiter of the Italian Legation, the one who had lighted Count Von Alutius' cigarette the moment the latter had taken it from the solid gold case adorned with the Imperial Coat of Arms, rose.

He was a small, delicate man, a creature of late hours and electric light, and his complexion was suggestive of those vermin that one sometimes finds under a flat stone.

"Brothers," he began, extending his hand in an oratorical gesture. "Fellow countrymen! I was present at the ball at the Italian Legation. I took an active part in the festivities as a functionary of the department for the distribution of liquid and other refreshments. The conversation between their Excellencies took place partly in the English and partly in the French languages. I took care that there were no matches on the table where their Excellencies were playing bridge, nor in fact anywhere in reach, and I hovered near to light their cigarettes. As you know, all languages are alike to me. His Excel-

lency, Count Von Alutius, spoke much of the integrity of the Turkish Empire, and, referring to Belgravia, he said its independence was a fait accompli. His Excellency, Sir William Winter, the British Ambassador, mentioned the heroic fight that we Tarachians have made for our liberty, and proposed that the province be made independent, with Prince Nicolas Georgevitch as the founder of its royal line. The proposition was well received by their Excellencies of Austro-Hungary and Germany.

I have overheard another conversation that took place after dinner at our legation, and I am prepared to announce that the project is on foot—is well nigh decided."

"The asses!" cried the President, "the blind asses! Do they not see the finger of Russia in all this? Has the Czar outwitted them all? Georgevitch is a Slav. He will mould the province to his will and turn it over to Russia. Do they not understand that a commanding intellect, a diplomat, a man of power, is needed as Governor of this province? A man who, on account of intimate relations with all the crowned heads of Europe and its great statesmen, will be able to take the place with dignity, and really govern? I am a man of modesty, as you all know, and I say with all modesty that there is only one candidate for the governorship of Tarachia,—myself."

"Don't be an ass, Vourouclas!" said the young orator with the reddish beard, cut square. "You stand no more chance than a bootblack."

"I an ass?" cried Vourouclas, his wrath swallowed up in astonishment. "You shall see. I will immediately write to his Imperial Majesty the Czar, to His Majesty the King of England, to His Imperial Majesty—"

"Bah!" interrupted the orator. "My great grandfather, my ancestors for a hundred years were Princes of Tarachia. I am the legitimate Prince of Tarachia, and if need be will go to the province with a faithful band of followers and raise an army. They shall see a fait accompli!"

"Your ancestors were Turkish princes—mere governors, and the title died with them."

"Charlatan!" hissed the Prince of Tarachia, "masquerader! Is it for this that my family shed its noble blood, falling for faith and fatherland that I should be obliged to associate with a tin can, a madman?"

"Impostor!" roared the President with a voice like a bull's, and in a moment pandemonium reigned in the room.

A half hour later the Prince of Tarachia was walking through the streets of Athens, accompanied by two members of the society. The moon had set, but the winter stars rained light upon the earth.

"What are you now, Forresti?" the Prince of Tarachia was saying.

"A clerk in the Bureau of Forestry."

"Yes, and you receive two hundred francs a month, I believe. Two hundred francs a month to support a wife and two children. Bah! Your life is not worth living. You do not live. You barely exist. And you, Panas, are an assistant in a notary's office. Your wages are one hundred and fifty a month? Yes. It is a living death. I shall become Prince of Tarachia, real Prince, as I am now in name, and those, however humble they may be, who have stood by me in my dark days, my beginnings, shall become great and powerful and rich, lords and nobles in the land. I shall become Prince, and after some years, like Oscar of Belgravia, King, and you, Foresti, and you, Panas, shall be great ministers of State." He stood looking at Aphrodite, burning low over Corfou, his pale face illuminated, his great eyes blazing.

"There is no doubt that the Powers have decided on the Automomy of Tarachia. Our duty to the mother country is ended. I shall raise the whole province in revolt and place myself at its head. The easiest solution of the difficulty presented will be to acknowledge me as the lawful lord. And now, the first thing to do, the first step, is to secure the disappearance of Georgevitch, before the powers commit themselves by proclaiming him."

Panas and Foresti turned suddenly and looked

long at the Prince, intelligence slowly dawning in their eyes.

"Murder?" they whispered in concert.

"Bah! When Kingdoms are at stake, and Kings are playing the game, such a thing as murder does not exist. He who changes the history of nations, of the world, is the instrument of God. Men are killed by thousands for less cause than this. Learn all you can of Georgevitch's habits and report to me tomorrow night. We must act quickly, and our blow must be sure and secret. Are you with me or not?" and he held out both his hands.

Panas, without a moment's hesitation seized the right. Foresti thought for a moment and took the left.

"For life or death," said the Prince.

"For life or death," the two men repeated.

"In success or hardship, in disgrace or glory."

"In success or hardship, in disgrace or glory."

"It is well, my children, and now let us go homeward and talk of the thing no more till tomorrow night."

They walked rapidly back toward the center of the town, until they reached the Prince's lodging, when Panas asked:

"And Vourouclas?"

"Pah! Don't give him a thought. He is a tin can. A masquerader, an idiot. Good night, my children."

1027581

## CHAPTER X

*Prince Georgevitch Makes Progress as a Wooer*

PRINCE Georgevitch felt rather well satisfied at the progress which he was making in his courtship of Miss Jane Schuyler. There was no denying that his manners were exquisite and he possessed that deferential way with women which is peculiarly appealing to them. That afternoon at Kaisariane he had distinctly scored by his quiet and dignfied bearing, and by his equal politeness to both women, which completely lulled Jane's fleeting suspicion that he might perhaps have learned who she was. Priscilla, indeed, was enthusiastic in his praises, and on this subject she found a ready echo in the Professor. On the way back to the shepherd's house, he had walked a large part of the distance with her, and had shown the greatest interest in the life which she was at present leading, in the aims of the Doolittleites in general, and in the theory of reincarnation.

"I very often walk out this way," he had said, "when promenading myself of the afternoon, and should be charmed to pass from here and talk further with you, if it is not objectionable."

"Just knock at the gate any time," replied Priscilla "and if I am here, I shall be glad to see you."

From the shepherd's house to the Spiti Merlin, Jane, the Prince and the Professor had walked together, and he had been too shrewd at that time to ask for permission to call on Miss Schuyler. He had another scheme in mind, indeed, which he put into effect with marked success. A day or two after the picnic at Kaisariane Jane and Priscilla were walking over the fields from Hagia Analipsys, a little monastery on a hill, not far from the shepherd's house, when they saw a man coming towards them.

"I believe that is the Prince!" exclaimed Miss Bates, shading her eyes with her hand.

"If this keeps on," said Jane, "I shall be obliged to adopt ancient Greek costume myself. I really believe you have made another conquest, Pris. He didn't ask permission to call on me!"

"Don't be absurd," replied Priscilla, blushing however with pleasure. "He is only interested in my costume, and curious about my way of living. If you think best, however, I—I will tell him about Abner."

"Do, by all means!" laughed Jane. "But now I want you to enter into a deep, dark conspiracy with me."

"Yes, I love conspiracies!"

"Then listen. I have no intention of letting the Prince escort me back to Athens, after dark, as I see it is going to be, for most of the way. True, the Professor introduced us to him, but the Professor knows nothing of him."

"Oh, Jane, can you not read character better than that? The man's soul shines out of his eyes—a melancholy, mysterious soul, but as pure as that of Arthur, or—or, Alcibiades."

"Perhaps, but I am not so romantic as you, and I have no intention of trapsing about the country after dark with strange noblemen. You must tell him I am staying with you. After he is well out of the way, your host, or one of the shepherds, can take a lantern and see me home. That is, if a carriage does not come for me. I told them at the Spiti to send a carriage to meet me if I was not back at nine."

At this moment the subject of discussion came up, and stood with hat in hand, bowing.

"Good evening, Miss Bates," he said, "Miss Vandervoert, good evening. This is indeed a dual pleasure. I called from the house, according to my promise to Miss Bates, and I judged that she was not in, as the old woman stood from the other side of the gate and shouted 'exo! exo!' at the top of her voice."

"Yes, that means 'out' in Greek," explained Miss Bates.

"Perfectly. But it also means 'get out,' when applied to a dog, and that frightful beast was making a dreadful uproar all the time, and making a desperate effort to penetrate the gate and dine from my legs. I certainly gained no idea from any one that I was to have the added pleasure of seeing Miss Vandervoert," with another bow in the direction of Miss Schuyler. "I am a great admirer of Americans, and especially of American ladies, and count myself fortunate when allowed to add another to my list of acquaintances. Are you continuing your walk, ladies? May I have the pleasure of accompanying you?"

In the above speech the Prince told two deliberate falsehoods, as he was not in the habit of taking long walks, and had made certain of Miss Schuyler's whereabouts before setting out this afternoon.

"Certainly," replied Jane, in a matter-of-fact tone. "We are just turning back toward the house, though, and you were doubtless going farther into the country?"

"Oh, it is equal to me, which way I walk. And as soon as I have the pleasure of ladies' society, especially of American ladies, my choice of direction is not long delayed!"

As they walked over the dry, grey-brown mountain side, with the level sun, low over Salamis, full in their faces, the Prince glanced

furtively at Jane from time to time, and seemed to see signs of great wealth and good birth in her features, in her carriage, in every slightest gesture, and he was well pleased with her. The more he looked at her, the stronger grew his belief in her providential sending to him. Though simply dressed in plain outing suit, and wearing a cheap, but not unbecoming hat, she had an independent way of walking and looking, and a certain gentle yet courageous manner of speech that often distinguish the rich and powerful and fortunate of the earth. Had this woman been born in Russia, she would have been a Grande Duchesse; if in England a "lady" or an "Honorable." In giving her the title of "Princess" he would but be bringing her into her own. She walked with the free, yet graceful stride of an athlete, and as the level, golden rays of the sun shone into her reddish brown eyes, he noticed that she looked straight ahead, with a strong, unflinching gaze. Her cheeks, slightly browned by much exposure to the wind and open air, were reddened now by the exercise to the color of winter roses, and the late sun touched her soft light hair with a golden tint. A feeling of tenderness, almost of affection, crept over him at the thought that she really belonged to him, and he found it necessary to be on his guard lest his voice betray him.

"Every day I take long walks," he said, "and I often pass from here, as there is something about this view here, and the appearance of the place, that reminds me of my ancestral estates of Croatia. The ancient castle stands back on a hill at the foot of a mountain range, much as the little monastery yonder, and the sea lies off in the distance, gleaming among the mountains and the islands as yonder."

"Have you no hopes of ever returning there, Prince?" asked Jane, sympathetically, now addressing him for the first time by his title.

"If it only depended upon me, I would go tomorrow. But the—what do you Americans call it,—the almighty dollar is lacking. I come of an old and noble race, a race that fought with ancient Greece and defied the Roman Empire. The mythology and history of the Croatians is as old as that of the Greeks, and we are akin to them. But our national existence is for a long time become a thing of the past. If I should make the commerce, sell beer or pork, I might buy back the palace of my fathers and a part of the ancient estate, and become again a Prince *in* Croatia if not *of* Croatia."

"How well His Highness speaks English!" cried Priscilla, admiringly.

"I have studied the English, seriously," said the Prince modestly, "but I do not find the occasion to make practice."

"You should marry a rich American girl," suggested Jane, "and then you could buy back your ancient palace, and also talk English every day. Or, perhaps, you do not consider that we Americans talk English?"

"Ah, it is well known that the Americans speak the English better than the inhabitants of England itself. And especially the American ladies. I can understand them so much better than the English ladies. When I hear an American lady speaking English, it seems to me to be the most beautiful tongue in the world! But as for marrying a rich woman, that is not my fate. We Georgevitchs all marry for sentiment, as you say, for love, is it not? Had it not been so, my family would have been wealthy and great today. My father, my grandfather, my before-grandfather, all married for sentiment, poor girls. I have had chances to marry for money, it is easy to marry for money for one who has that bauble, a title, but the idea is abhorrent to me. No, I shall marry some poor girl for love, and remain poor and obscure; perhaps, who may say, even drop my title, and give lessons in French. So will pass an ancient and princely house."

Here he sighed and gazed pathetically at Jane.

At this moment they came out into the open road, not far from the shepherd's cottage. The

sun was just setting in a final glory of melted gold and orange and saffron. In the distance Spiro came ambling along on his little ragged donkey, spurts of white dust, fine as flour, rising about the animal's feet. The red shepherd dog, dozing in front of the gate, saw the pedestrians and came down the road at them, straight and swift as a thunderbolt, invisible in a cloud of dust that trailed far behind him, like smoke.

Jane stood still, pale with fear, while Priscilla stooped over and pulled frantically at a stone that would not come loose from the ground.

"Have no fear, ladies!" cried the Prince, realizing that this was the opportunity of his life, "have no fear! A Georgevitch protects you!" and he stood waiting for the savage animal, cane upraised.

The dog stopped suddenly some distance from the group, and circled, snarling. Priscilla called him again and again, by name, but he pretended not to recognize her. Every time the Prince shook his cane, he snarled and barked in a hysteria of rage.

This situation might have continued indefinitely, had not Spiro now arrived. Slipping over the tail of his donkey, he ran up to the dog and gave him a kick which sent him howling back to the house. Then, showing all his

white teeth in a smile, he turned back with the party, walking at Jane's side, and saying things to her in Greek which she could not understand.

Arriving at the gate, he walked boldly in and, catching the animal by his collar, dragged him to his chain and made him fast. Holding the gate wide, he bowed with much natural grace, and with a sweep of the hand motioned the ladies in.

"How brave he is!" cried Priscilla. "One could almost imagine him a reincarnation of Alexander the Great. And you were brave too, Prince. You have the soul of a—a, why I do not know the name of a single one of your ancient heroes!"

"It needs a shepherd to reduce a shepherd dog" said the Prince. "They are raised together and are all of one breed."

After many expressions of gratitude to the ladies for having allowed him to join them, and of pleasure for the fortunate accident which threw him in their way, Georgevitch started home with the Acropolis looming bright before, gigantic and sharply distinct in the clear, soft light that suffused all the sky, just after sunset. Some of its columns were grey white, as ashes, and others reddish brown, like well colored meerschaum.

Jane waited till quite late for the carriage, which did not arrive; she had about made up her mind to pass the night with Priscilla, when the latter, who knew a little Greek, said:

"What do you think, Jane? Spiro is offering to see you home. Is he not absurd?"

"By no means," said Miss Schuyler, without a moment's hesitation. "I would trust myself anywhere with him. Tell him I accept with pleasure."

She accordingly set out for Athens, along the dusty road that lay white in the starlight, accompanied by Spiro.

The red dog, released from his chain, trotted at their heels.

## CHAPTER XI

### *A Dog Takes a Hand in Eastern Politics*

SPIRO, with his rough, long-haired capote, thick as a bedquilt, thrown jauntily over his left shoulder, his stout crook carried lance-wise in his right hand, his crimson turban, his tight woolen leggins, his white Attic kilt, his red tsaroukia with their pointed toes that gave one the impression that he had impaled a powder puff on the tip of each shoe—Spiro, thus attired, was an attractive and not unromantic figure. He walked with an easy, swinging stride that cost him not the least effort, and yet that caused Jane, albeit an outdoor girl, no slight exertion to keep up with him. Spiro several times addressed her, smiling pleasantly and pointing at some object or other with his crook, but she had not the faintest idea of his meaning, so she shook her head each time and laughed.

Once he stooped, picked a sprig from a wayside plant and handed it to her. Jane looked at him enquiringly, for it was naught but a bit of green, with no flower. He took it from her and smelled it, giving vent to an exaggerated sigh of satisfaction and handed it to her again. Jane smelled, and found that it had a pleasant, aromatic odor. She looked at Spiro, nodded and

smiled comprehension and put it to her nose again. And thus a slight degree of human intercourse was established between these two: the shepherd from Mount Hymettus, ignorant almost as the dog at his heels, and the daughter of luxury, education and refinement both found the odor of a certain wild herb agreeable. Furthermore, the one was gratified to perceive that he had afforded a pleasure, though slight, to the queenly creature at his side, while the other was touched by a gentlemanly and delicate attention on the part of a child of the forest and the mountain. Jane understood now, quite clearly, that it would not do to offer Spiro money for accompanying her home.

They walked on for some distance in silence, during which she occasionally smelled of the plant, and sighed her satisfaction.

To her surprise, Spiro suddenly broke into song with a wild, plaintive melody in a minor key, so high at times that he was obliged to arrest his steps and throw back his head.

The song bade fair to be interminable and Jane was wondering very much what it was about, and how she should ever find out, when the sound of a dog barking arrested her attention and caused her to look around. At first the idea occurred to her that one of the fierce brutes that infest Greece everywhere beyond the limits of the larger towns, was about to at-

tack them, and she was seized with a tremor of fear. One glance satisfied her, however, that this surmise was wrong. The dog in question was running about in one place and barking nervously rather than savagely. Occasionally he looked down, as though at some object on the ground. He was some distance behind them, and a little way from the road over which they had just come. Spiro called him by name, but he paid no heed, save to look toward the shepherd, and bark more frantically than ever; for it was the red dog from Priscilla's yard.

Spiro whistled coaxingly and turned his face toward town again, when the animal dashed nearly up to him, yelped as though in a vain effort to talk, and rushed back to the spot from which he had come.

"What can it be?" asked Jane, forgetting for the moment that her companion knew no English. "Perhaps it is some wild animal. We had better run away as fast as ever we can."

Spiro muttered something, and went to see.

He found the dog standing by the edge of a round hole about three feet in diameter, with casing of antique Pentelic. As soon as the shepherd arrived and began to peer down into the dark shaft, the dog sat upon his haunches, wagging his tail, and whining eagerly. Spiro neither saw nor heard anything and concluded

that a rat or some other little animal must have taken refuge in the hole. He therefore laughed, shook his head and turned away with Jane who had come to a similar conclusion; whereupon Edhem Pasha, for so the animal was named after a famous Turkish General, became frantic, barking and dashing to and fro like mad.

When Jane and Spiro had gone away to a considerable distance, Edhem came running after them a second time, and putting himself before them in the road, continued to yelp and whine in a manner that left no doubt as to his meaning. He was saying, as plainly as words:

"Come back, come back with me! Something unusual has happened, something of human rather than of canine interest. Come back, and you shall see!"

Spiro was for paying no attention to him, and even threatened him with his crook, but it was Jane this time who turned about and went resolutely to the ancient well. Falling upon hands and knees by the brink, she held her ear close down and listened, the dog standing with his great shaggy head close to hers, uttering from time to time low, eager whines, as though to say:

"Can't you hear? Use your poor human senses, such as they are. If you can't smell, can you not at least hear?"

And at last she heard: from far down in the depths of that dark shaft there came to her ears a feeble groan. She sprang to her feet and cried in English:

"Spiro, there's a man in the bottom of the well! Some one has fallen in there, and we must help him out or he will die!"

Spiro could understand nothing of the words, but he comprehended from Jane's excitement that she had heard something, so he also stooped and listened, and in his turn heard the feeble groans also.

It was necessary to obtain immediate aid. Could Jane have talked to Spiro, she would have told him to leave her behind with Edhem Pasha, and run for men and a rope. In fact, she seized the dog by the collar and gave the shepherd a push, pointing toward the city. He did not go however, and it is probable, even if he had caught her meaning that he did not think best to leave her there alone in the night.

Fortunately, at this moment the sound of wheels was heard in the distance, and Jane's much belated carriage drove up. The man, who had been to America and spoke English fairly well, had many explanations to offer. The doorkeeper, that masquerader, had entirely forgotten to send a carriage after her, he explained.

"But I was passing," he continued, "and saw him at the gate, the old villain. When he saw me, he suddenly remembered, for you generally prefer me. I whipped up my horses, I tore through the night. See how they smoke and lather. I hope you will not think we are all as uncivilized as that tin can of a doorkeeper at the Spiti Merlin!"

"Never mind that now," said Jane. "It is providential that you came just at this moment. There is a man in this well, and we must get him out. Tell Spiro to stay here, while you drive me to the nearest house for help."

The nearest house proved to be Priscilla's, and from there the cabman returned in a little more than a half an hour with a man, two stout boys ,and a long rope.

One of the boys tied the rope about his waist, and was let down into the shaft, holding a lighted lantern. After much shouting between the boy at the bottom of the well and the Greeks at the brink, the latter began to haul, while Jane stood by in a state of the most intense excitement.

She had not long to wait, for within a couple of minutes a limp form was lifted out, and laid upon the ground.

Jane stooped and looked, and beheld the pale face, with a red scar upon the brow, of Prince Nicolas Georgevitch.

## CHAPTER XII

### *A Woman and a Wounded Prince*

THE shepherds were for lifting the Prince into Jane's carriage and driving directly to Athens with him, but she, like a sensible American girl, understood enough of such matters to know that such a proceeding, if any bones were broken or if he were injured internally, might prove fatal. She therefore made a couch of two or three of the thick woolen capotes worn by the bystanders, and brought into service one of the carriage cushions as a pillow. On this bed Georgevitch, still unconscious, was laid as tenderly as possible. He groaned when he was lifted, and the sound went to Jane's heart.

After a consultation with Isocrates, the cabman, Spiro was sent on foot to the great Evangelismos hospital for an ambulance and a physician. Like Louis, the shepherd who won the first Marathon race, he was a fast and tireless runner, and would be able to make the distance in quicker time than the team with the heavy carriage.

About two hours elapsed from the time that Spiro tightened his belt about him and set off down the road at an easy swinging stride until the rattle of the ambulance wheels was heard

in the distance. Jane rubbed the limp hands of the man lying there stark and pale in the late starlight, and looked keenly into the face for any signs of returning consciousness. After an hour or more one of the shepherds brought cognac and some water in a queer wooden bottle. He sprinkled the Prince's face, and Jane herself took the cognac bottle and turned a few drops into his partly open mouth, causing him to strangle horribly and groan, without regaining possession of his senses.

This result frightened her, and she did not make the attempt again.

During all this interval the shepherds showed her the most touching deference and courtesy. One of them folded his jacket to protect her knees from the pebbles as she knelt on the ground, and another brought a huge rock upon which he placed soft garments to make a seat for her.

It was Edhem Pasha who first announced the coming of the ambulance. He had trotted after Spiro, and now suddenly bolted into sight, the cloud of dust which he brought with him thick enough to be visible in the starlight. Whirling about half a dozen times as though on a pivot, he gave vent to a series of sharp yelps, after which he flew back in the direction of town and again, as though shot from a catapult.

"It is coming! It is coming!" exclaimed

the shepherds in Greek, and Isocrates explained to Jane:

"The shepherds understand dog language. They say the ambulance is coming. Edhem Pasha has come on ahead to tell us, to relieve our minds."

Sure enough, five minutes later the sound of wheels was heard, and soon a modern ambulance drove up with a young doctor sitting on the box beside the driver. Jumping down the physician saluted Jane respectfully, asked a few questions of the Greeks, then kneeling by the injured man, began to run over him with dexterous fingers. At last he arose and turned toward Jane, addressing her in French:

"Was it you, Madame," he asked, "who sent for the ambulance?"

He was a small, dark man, with a pale face, and a strong chin.

"Yes," she replied, "I thought, if any bones were broken, that it would not do to drive him home in the carriage."

"He probably owes his life to you," replied the young doctor, lifting his hat and bowing, "if indeed he lives. With this superficial examination I cannot tell if he is internally injured. I am only certain now that his right hip is dislocated, and that lifting him into the carriage and jolting him over this rough road to town would almost certainly have killed him.

But I must get him back to the hospital as soon as possible, where he can be looked after."

A stretcher which had been brought was worked under the prostrate form as carefully as possible, which was then lifted into the ambulance. Every time the Prince was moved, he groaned.

"Is he conscious?" asked Jane, when the doctor had finished and was ready to start.

"Not exactly. Dislocation of the hip is the most painful injury to which the human system is liable. At the slightest movement the pain wakes him up, as it were, but he does not recognize any body. Then he faints away again."

"Poor man!" muttered Jane. "Poor man! Is there anything I can do, doctor? If there is, please let me know."

"Nothing more," replied the doctor. "You have already saved him from the most terrible agony, and probable death. Is he, may I ask, a relative or close friend? If so, if you will give me your name and address——"

"Oh no, only an acquaintance. But I naturally feel interested, having happened upon him just at this time. And it is dreadful, awful, to see a human being suffer so."

"If you will come to the hospital at nine in the morning," said the doctor, "I will tell you how he is. Ask for Dr. Macres. Good night, Madame. Make as good time as possible, driver, but go carefully."

The ambulance drove away, and Jane, after shaking hands with all the shepherds, who stood bareheaded before her, got into the carriage and started for town.

The last creature to bid her adieu was Edhem Pasha, who came up holding his shaggy head low and wagging the entire rear half of his body. She patted him, and felt that she should never be afraid of him again. She did not know that she had made a friend till death, faithful as few men know how to be faithful, whom neither poverty, nor misfortune nor disgrace would ever change or alienate.

## CHAPTER XIII

### *The Professor Has a Dream*

THE Professor was devoting his last days in Athens to a general "round-up" of the ancient monuments and places that meant the most to him as an archæologist and classical scholar. Without regard to the heat of the middle of the day, when the sun blazed fiercely in a cloudless sky, or that the roosters and cats had kept him awake most of the preceding night he trotted tirelessly from the National Museum to the Hill of Colonos, from the Pnyx to the Acropolis, from the Theseion, ("so-called," as the scholars always add), to the Temple of Olympian Zeus, from the old Market to the Monument of Lysicrates.

"There is no knowing when I shall get back here again," he said, "and I must not lose a moment's time wile I am here."

This remark he made to Jane, Priscilla and Laselle on the day after Prince Georgevitch's almost miraculous escape from death. It was four o'clock in the afternoon, and he had met his three compatriots in the Ancient Theatre of Dionysus.

"Would you come back here next year if you could, Professor?" asked Jane.

"If I were a free man," he replied sadly, "and were well supplied with money, I would return here and excavate. I have discovered, I tell you this in confidence—I have your words that you will none of you mention this to a soul?"

They all agreed.

"I have discovered," looking nervously about him and speaking low, as though afraid of being overheard, "what I believe is the entrance, or dromos, to a bee-hive tomb. It is out not far from Miss Bates' residence. I have not mentioned it to a person because I have cherished the hope that I might some day come back and excavate it. "But," and he sighed sadly, "I fear it has been but a vain dream, and in any case you will not betray my secret. "Perhaps," he added, excitedly, "it has never been rifled, and we should find objects in it contemporaneous with the Cyclopean walls on the Acropolis—gold death masks of prehistoric kings, engraved sword blades of Homeric bronze, beautiful cups of solid beaten gold, like those from Vaphio, adorned with scenes depicting the life of a people that has left no other record of itself."

"How much money would you require to make these excavations?" asked Jane, quietly, her eyes gleaming with excitement.

"About two thousand dollars for a single season's campaign—a hard sum to raise for such

a purpose. If I got it, I would be willing to forego my salary for six months, but then I should be obliged to hire a substitute for my place in the Greek department, and it would cost me $1,500 to engage a capable young man. No! No! It is an idle dream!"

Jane smiled and made a silent resolution; having done which, and settled certain matters in her mind to her own satisfaction, she changed the subject.

"Did you hear of the terrible accident to your friend, Prince Georgevitch, last night?" she asked of the Professor.

"Terrible accident! No, what was it? I am so busy saying good bye to the monuments of ancient Athens that I hear of nothing that is going on in the modern world. I hope he was not killed, that nice fellow?"

"No, not quite. That is, we all hope not. Why, last evening, while returning after dark from a walk out in the direction of Miss Bates' house, he fell into an ancient well, or shaft. Fortunately, I had been out visiting Priscilla, and returned to town later, accompanied by a shepherd. Our attention was called to the fact that there was a man in the well, by the wonderful keenness and intelligence of a dog. My cabman came along at that moment, providentially, and went for help. The shepherd ran into town and brought an ambulance."

During this recital, which he had heard before, Laselle stood by tracing with his cane the letters of an inscription on one of the marble seats of the front row of the theatre.

He turned now and addressed the Professor.

"The fact is, Miss ah—Vandervoert, imagines that she is in Philadelphia, and that she can take strolls about the country in the evening, or rather, in the night, with perfect safety."

He spoke in a slow, even tone that was not quite a drawl, and that suggested, somehow, the amiable cynic, slightly blase. He was a slender, well knit man of medium height, with brown hair, thin at the temples, very blue eyes, and a complexion that his women friends often envied.

Laselle was one of those quiet-clear-headed fellows who are always correct. One could not imagine him as ever making an ass of himself even in the slightest degree in society, or of becoming an object of amusement to others. He was sure of himself and always at ease without appearing bold. In one particular only he rendered himself a trifle conspicuous, and that was in the matter of dress. He was by no means a fop, yet he considered it necessary to wear special attire for each occasion and the occasions were rather more numerous with him

than with the ordinary run of mankind, including besides business suit for the forenoon, redingote and silk hat for the afternoon and evening dress for dinner and after, suits for golf, for tennis, for walking, for riding, for driving, for automobiling.

Today, as he had regularly set out for a walk with Miss Schuyler, he was attired in a Norfolk jacket of Scotch grey tightened about the waist by a belt, knee breeches of the same material, light grey stockings and heavy tan shoes. A grey cap gave the finishing touch to this not ungraceful costume, which Laselle considered necessary for a man "regularly taking a walk."

"The fact is," he continued, "that the only surviving scion of an ancient and honorable house owes his existence to Miss Vandervoert's penchant for wandering about at night, and risking her own life."

Laselle was a trifle pale, and though his voice betrayed not the slightest emotion, any one who knew him intimately would have perceived that he was vexed. Jane glanced at him, smiling.

"But we are not sure that the poor Prince owes his existence to me, or to any one else, as yet," she said. "I sent over to the hospital to enquire this morning, and they told me that he was in a critical condition." She came up close

to Laselle and spoke beseechingly, as though desiring to convince him of the injustice of his anger. "It is more Christian to think of the poor man's terrible injury and of his sufferings, than of my supposed imprudence."

"Not supposed. Real. And, naturally, your friends who have known you for the last twenty years, and more—"

"I forgive you for the 'more,'" interrupted Jane, "for I can see that you are really vexed."

"Naturally, I say, your old friends feel more of an interest in your safety than they do in that of scions of ancient houses. You might very easily have tumbled into the same well yourself. There are any number of these wells in the fields about Athens and it is said that there are the bones of human beings and of other animals in the bottom of nearly every one of them."

"Indeed!" exclaimed the Professor, with sudden interest, forgetting for the moment his friend, Georgevitch, and the well-nigh fatal accident. "They may, some of them, at least, be ancient sacrificial pits. I must look into this matter. I will go out tomorrow and examine the pit into which the Prince fell. Do you remember its exact locality, Miss Vandervoert?"

"Even if she doesn't, I know where it is," volunteered Priscilla. "If you will come out to my house, I will walk over to the place with you."

Laselle smiled knowingly at Jane and the two strolled away together up one of the aisles between the ruined seats.

"It looks as though it would be a match," whispered the secretary. "As though the real Greek and the pseudo Greek would join fortunes."

"And which is real and which is pseudo?" asked Jane.

"The Professor is the real thing, of course. He lives in Ancient Greece, all his thoughts are colored by its literature, and his great learning brings the ancient world intimately and accurately before his mind's eye. Our dumpy friend, on the other hand, wears a classic costume as a sort of fad, and under that she is about as much of an ancient Greek as—as Lydia Pinkham.

"But look here, Jane, to return to our muttons: as your guide, philosopher and friend, I positively command you to desist from walking about the country after dark."

"Booh!" said Jane. "I will sit down in this parquet seat, if you are going to be tiresome and scold, and listen as patiently as possible. But do make it short, Wash, and I'll promise anything."

"All right," said Laselle, "We'll take it for granted that you have promised to do no more tramping about the country after dark. By the way, the Professor is very comfortably in-

stalled in the high-backed chair in the front row, and for a wonder Priscilla is not talking to him. Has she the sense to understand that he at this moment is, in his mind's eye, seeing some play of Aristophanes or Euripides being enacted before him, and that the triremes of Themistocles, or some other great sea lord, are creeping to and fro on the bay yonder, that gleams so brightly in the sun?"

With this remark Laselle dropped into the seat at Miss Schuyler's side and under the influence of the place they both became silent.

One must be very unimaginative indeed, in such a place as the Theatre of Dionysus, not to picture to himself in some vague way the immense auditorium filled with a keen and eager throng, not to see the actors of old time coming out upon the stage to face the most critical audience in the world's history, while the chorus moves through rhythmic evolutions, chanting stately odes. If one is at all familiar with the ancient classics, he may even catch some faint echoes of the inextinguishable laughter kindled by the divine wit of Aristophanes, or feel some thrill of the emotion aroused by the sufferings of Antigone or Hecuba.

Laselle and Miss Schuyler sat for perhaps twenty minutes without speaking, following the train of thought suggested by the former's remarks, when they were joined by Priscilla.

"The Professor has actually gone to sleep," she remarked. "He dropped off all of a sudden, and I don't wonder, he has been running about so tirelessly by day. He was talking about roosters when Morpheus touched him with his wand, saying that he could not feel angry at the birds, they were so distinctly Athenian, and he was displaying his wonderful learning by quoting passages from the ancient authors—Socrates and Plato, and I don't know who all. I propped my umbrella up over his head, so that he shouldn't be sun-struck, and left him to 'requiescat in pace.'"

"Sit down by us then," said Jane, laughing.

"And imagine that you are watching an ancient play, and that the Professor, multiplied by several thousand, constitutes the audience."

"Here come three more," observed Priscilla, dropping into a seat, and mopping her glowing face with her handkerchief.

It was true. At that moment the Prince of Tarachia entered the auditorium from the right, where he was met by Forresti and Panas, from the other direction.

"So you made a mess of it, a salad," said the Prince. "A pretty beginning!"

"Take care," whispered Panas, nodding at the sleeping Professor, "perhaps he understands Greek."

"Bah!" snarled the Prince, who was

thoroughly out of sorts with all the world. "It's a German or English tourist. Some stupid old ass of a Greek professor, probably. They none of them understand Greek. Besides, he's asleep. What did you do? How did you manage to fail?"

"I don't know that we have failed," replied Forresti. "They say at the hospital that he is in a critical condition."

"Oh, he'll live. Have no fear of that. What did you do, I ask?"

"We had a splendid plan," explained Forresti. "Panas hid behind a rock near the well and cried 'help! help! I have broken my leg.' I came from the other direction just at this moment—(I had been hiding behind a brush sheep corral) and cried, 'he was thrown from his horse, we must help him.' I ran toward Panas and Georgevitch came with me. 'His horse came tearing down the road just now,' I said. 'Did you see him.' Just like that I said, 'did you see him?' Here were Georgevitch and I, there was Panas, there the well—" the speaker had become very excited, as is the custom of southern races, and was talking now with his eyes, his arms, his legs, his entire body.

"Finish, you idiot!" commanded the Prince of Tarachia, "what did you do?"

"I ran close to the pit, on the outside. When we reached it, I gave a sudden push. Holy

Virgin, it was easy! He went in, as though the earth had swallowed him. I heard him strike the bottom like a sack of potatoes. He gave one scream as he disappeared. Panas jumped up and threw in a stone. It was our intention to throw in more to make sure, but just then a dog came tearing across the field, a big savage dog. We ran. He followed us a ways, then returned to the pit, and barked and barked. We saw a man and a woman coming toward the pit, and left."

"Did Georgevitch recognize you?" asked the Prince.

"Impossible. I was disguised."

At this moment the Professor stretched, yawned and looked about him.

"He is awake," whispered Panas.

The Professor rose slowly to his feet, knocking over the umbrella, which he regarded for a few seconds with considerable perplexity.

The Prince of Tarachia and his two murderers left the theatre.

"I have had a wonderful dream!" cried the Professor, walking rapidly up the aisle to his American friends. He was trembling with excitement. His face was transfigured. "I have had a vision. In my sleep the horologe of eternity has turned back 2400 years, and I have seen the entire 'Epitrepontes' of Maenander played before an Athenian audience. I was the Priest

of Dionysus, sitting under a canopy, in the seat of honor, there, in that seat," and he pointed with Priscilla's umbrella, which he had forgotten to close. "It was a gay scene, a brilliant scene. The men were sitting here, the women over there, separate, the hetairai yonder, in a brilliant group. The whole theatre was a garden of color, the men wearing chitons and himatia of white, red, crimson, purple, blood red, and all crowned with garlands, in honor of the god, the women attired in white, saffron, yellow, purple, green, dark and pale, and the famous ass grey. It was early morning, and I saw the whole play. The theatre was full when I arrived, and the entire audience arose and stood until I took my seat. What perfect acting! and what beautiful pronunciation of the Greek, which sounded somewhat as the modern tongue, in the theatres of today. How distinctly I remember it all! How delighted I was when Habrotonon received her liberty! Only one circumstance marred the pleasure of the occasion. The audience, toward the end, wearied of a mediocre actor, Smicrines, who had obtained his role through the influence of the contractor. They hissed and hissed, and began at last to throw missiles at him. I thought they were going to fall on him and beat him, when I was awakened by men near me, talking excitedly, one in an angry tone. Then I perceived that the canopy over my head was this

umbrella, which somebody had kindly put over me. In fact, there was in ancient times a canopy over the chair of the Priest of Dionysus."

"It is my umbrella," cried Priscilla; "It was the influence of the place that made me do it. And oh, Professor! We know you now! You are the reincarnation of the Priest of Dionysus!"

## CHAPTER XIV

### *A Prince Plows with a Heifer*

MY DEAR JANE:—

Your letter came to me last night. Spiro, the shepherd, brought it. You, of course, have not forgotten Spiro, the countryman with the classical nose, the curly hair, and the little donkey, who looks like a reincarnation of the Hermes of Praxiteles—Spiro I mean, not the donkey. It may seem incredible to you, but I do really believe that Spiro with all his simple sincere noble heart is in love with you. It would be, of course, madness of him to ever dream of such a thing; but then, if the doctrine of reincarnation is true, and who knows it may be, and a king were to come back to earth in the form of a shepherd, he might quite naturally fall in love with a princess. Spiro asks me every day when you are coming back, and his eyes look big and wistful. Several times he has brought things that I knew were intended for you in case you had arrived—wild flowers, a cute little bird that sings, some Hymettus honey, and a dear cunning kid that has now become a goat. He asked if the letter was from you, and stood by while I read it. When I told him you were

coming back this winter, he cried "thanks be to the Virgin," and turned pale with joy.

The other two members of our rural community who will be glad to see you are Edhem Pasha, the shepherd dog, and myself. Speaking of Edhem reminds me of poor Prince Georgevitch, who would be dead today lying cold and stiff in the bottom of a well but for Edhem Pasha. He told me a secret while he was at the hospital, Jane; the Prince, I mean, not the dog; which I promised never to tell to you, and I would not have done so but now that you are coming back I think I ought, so that you may know how to act. Jane! The Prince said that he loved you, and that he would have kept this secret locked up in his bosom only that it burned so he felt he must tell it to someone, and that I, being your nearest friend, he found some relief in telling it to me. He said that he never expected to see you again, and that he felt he was going to die anyway, and that after his corpse was laid away in the cold tomb I could tell you and that then perhaps you would come and lay a little bunch of violets on his grave. It was very beautiful and noble, and his face looked so pale and grand and aristocratic on the white pillow in the hospital room that I commenced to sob and boo-hoo like a baby. I said, "Prince, why did you not tell her before she went away?" and he replied: "Alas, my dear young lady, I see

that your maiden heart is entirely romantic and impractical. I am poor and she is poor, and I am that most useless thing on earth, the penniless scion of a princely house. I have nothing to offer her but an empty title, and one cannot live on that, can he?" You should have seen how sadly he smiled when he said that, and how noble he looked, and then he cried, "If I get well, and am not a cripple, I will seek work, I will enter commerce, I will make a fortune and lay it at her little feet!"

Oh, Jane, how I pitied him, and how I longed to tell him that you did not need money, that you had as much as his family ever possessed in its palmiest days, but I could not do so; all I could say was that I did not believe Miss Vandervoert cared one straw for money. He came out to my house yesterday, Jane, on horseback, and enquired if I heard from you. I told him you were in Switzerland, and he asked to be remembered. He said nothing of the conversation in the hospital, but I knew from the sad way he looked at me and sighed that he was thinking of it. He is almost well now, except that he limps slightly in one leg, but that will pass away, and when he is on horseback with one of the royal princes, as I saw him the other day, one would never suspect that he had once fallen to the bottom of an ancient well (Prince Georgevitch, not the Royal Prince).

Jane! You have always wanted to marry a man who loved you for yourself and not your money. Here is your chance—a man noble, well-born, a gentleman with a head and heart who has no more idea that you are rich than the babe unborn—don't miss it! When you come back you can decide for yourself, but do hurry. I think the poor man has suffered enough, and agony of the mind is harder to be endured than bodily pain.

You will not be surprised to hear that I have had a letter from Professor Goodwin Harkins, who tells me that some anonymous millionaire has donated the money for him to excavate a year in Greece, and he is going to attack the tumulus near my residence. He says he cannot believe he is awake; that the wildest and dearest dream of his life is being realized, that he has made all his arrangements and is sailing soon. He has asked me to find him a room in a peasant's cottage near the tumulus, and he is so happy he don't care whether they keep roosters or not—under ordinary circumstances he would have made it a condition to have the roosters killed, but no! he cannot bear to think that anything should suffer for his good luck, not even a rooster.

So you see we shall all be together again in beautiful Greece, but do come quickly, dear Jane. You ought to see how wonderful the stars

are here now, especially Aphrodite, which rises every night at six while it is still bright daylight and blazes like a great white diamond in the sky of the daintiest, palest, most delicate blue. But how I do run on, to be sure! I must close and write to Abner, from whom I received a letter about a month ago; his mother was never better in her life—there's fidelity for you, Jane.

From your devoted friend,

Priscilla.

This letter, Miss Bates, sitting on the side of her bed in the little room of the peasant's cottage, wrote on a rough deal table, by the light of a wax candle. Reading it through hastily, she put in a few commas at random where she found them sparsest. No woman really understands punctuation. Folding it neatly, she put it into an envelope which she addressed to:

Miss Jane Schuyler,
St. Beatembearg,
Berner Oberland,
Suisse.

Having sealed and laid it to one side, she began her yearly letter to Abner Hale, her faithful New England fiance.

## CHAPTER XV

### *Miss Vandervoert Returns to Athens*

ATHENS is the capital of Greece in the sense that the Chamber of Deputies sits there, if the term "sits" can be applied to a body of men who are about as sedative as pop corn in a popper, and who are all orators by virtue of their very nationality and their loquacious, plausible and eruptive blood. The central offices of the government are there, too, and the palaces of the king and the royal princes. There, too, the wealthy members of the race settle when they retire from business to build themselves splendid residences, and the officers of influence and good family spend their lives sitting in the city's elegant cafes, clanking their sabres about its squares or dancing afternoons and evenings in the magnificent ball rooms of Kephysia Avenue and the Street of Herodes Atticus. It is the "capital" of Greece in the sense that it contains the National University and is embellished with many beautiful hospitals and eleemosynary institutions founded by wealthy Hellenes to whom the idea of being forgotten after death was distasteful.

There are more than enough of these admirable institutions, and in some cases the money might have been put to better use, yet one cannot help feeling that orphan asylums and hospitals are more humane and civilized monuments than pyramids, and represent a higher civilization, though if one is to believe Lord Byron, even pyramids are futile:

"Let not a monument give you or me hopes,
Since not a pinch of dust remains of Cheops."

It is a capital of which any country might be proud: with its wide, clean streets, its white buildings of classic simplicity and elegance, its smart electric tramlines, its charming suburban resorts, its wonderful views of the sea strewn thick with islands, its glorious monuments of a glorious past. Few who know it well will dispute the claim which its inhabitants make for it, that it is the cleanest and most beautiful city of the Mediterranean.

In addition to all this, it possesses an indefinable charm of climate and sky which lend to it a peculiar, an unrivalled and unchallengable grace. Athens is a mistress, who, like all mistresses, can be disagreeable. She has moods of rain and wind and dust that make one wish to be elsewhere. She is too clever a mistress, too supreme and irresistible a coquette to cloy her lovers with unchanging sweetness, or not to understand the potency of contrast. There is a

well-authenticated saying that the sun is seen, for a few moments at least, every day in the year at Athens.

There are hours in every season of the year that are paradisiacal in the capital of Greece: in the early mornings of summer when a soft breeze is whispering from the sea and the great stars are still brilliant in a lilac sky, or in the afternoons when all the world is half asleep, and the cicadas are chirping: in the evenings of spring when the moon is full and the nightingales are singing in the gardens in full choir; in the afternoons of winter when the sun is shining in a sky flecked with feathery clouds and one feels as though he could swim or float in the pellucid atmosphere, and yet is satisfied to sit under the pepper trees or in front of the cafes and dream of his boyhood and his early loves.

But we were speaking of Athens as the "Capital" of Greece, and such she is in fact. She is the largest city on Hellenic soil, and the government offices are located there as we have already pointed out; but it should be added that about the only respect in which she gets into close touch with the rest of the country lies in the fact that the taxes, and enormous taxes they are, too, are rated there.

Athens is as little like the rest of Greece as can be imagined; she is as though some god had

taken her on the palm of his hand and set her carefully down in the midst of an alien land.

Greece is a country of sturdy, shrewd peasants, so democratic that they have no comprehension of caste, and, unfortunately, little of authority. It is a country of primitive habits, where men and animals have the same mental attitude toward baths and insect parasites; the former are taken when one gets caught in the rain, or falls into the water accidentally, the latter are as necessary and natural an equipment as the hair on one's head.

Greece is a country of primal and death-dealing loves and hates, of simple faith in the Virgin Mary and innumerable Saints.

In Greece, and by "Greece" is meant anywhere in the realm of King George outside the city limits of Athens, disease and accident are the result of the Evil Eye, which must be exorcised by priest or by an old witch, sole inheritor of some magic formula, whispered into her ear by the dying breath of the woman who held the secret in the generation immediately preceding.

Greece is a country of innumerable fierce dogs, of goats and sheep and donkeys, and of cheese-making men who measure distance by the number of hours it takes to reach a place on foot.

Athens is a city whose chief inhabitants are

the numerous members of the foreign royal family and the legations and financial commissioners of the various foreign Powers. It has an exclusive social set, known as "The Fifty-Two," conditions of membership being that one must have danced three times with royalty and have been invited to one or more small, exclusive parties at a royal residence. The sole aim and ambition of the Athens social climber is to entertain a prince or princess. Of this, Greek millionaires in Egypt and Turkey and the Balkan States dream, and with this end in view their wives urge them to retire from business and build marble palaces on the Rue Kephyssia. The end once gained, and it is not difficult of attainment if money be plenty, the erstwhile cotton merchant, the dealer in goat hides or tobacco, the son of a sturdy peasant couple, gets him a new set of friends and becomes an aristocrat.

In Athens atheism, electricity, and the latest Paris fashions prevail, and the smart set dance and gamble the winter away with a devotion to amusement unsurpassed in any city in the world.

On Jane's return to the Capital of Greece early in December, she found the social season in full swing, which means a dance every afternoon at one or more of the leading Greek houses, with a great ball in the evening at some

legation or palace or residence of one of the Ministers of State.

Through the good offices of Laselle and Georgevitch, she was put down on invitation lists everywhere, and every day a batch of invitations came to her at the Spiti Merlin.

Georgevitch called upon her soon after her arrival. She had been dreading her first meeting with him a little, as she had Priscilla's letter in mind, and feared that he might betray uncomfortable agitation in her presence, or burst forth with an avowal which she was not prepared to receive favorably. She had been and still was, she could not help confessing to herself, profoundly touched by Priscilla's letter, and had not the slightest doubt of the sincerity of the Prince's feeling for her. And this credence was strengthened by the fact that his avowal had seemingly not been intended for her ear.

He soon put her at ease, however, as he sat there talking to her in the little parlor of the Spiti. She noticed that he was slightly lame as he advanced to meet her, and bowed over her hand with exquisite deference, but otherwise he bore no traces of his fearful mishap.

Five minutes conversation convinced her that he had no intention of carrying the interview beyond conventional limits.

"I hope you are entirely recovered from your dreadful accident," she asked.

"Entirely," he replied, "with the exception of a slight limping of the leg, which I always hope to carry with me."

"What an original idea!" laughed Jane.

"Yes," insisted the Prince, "as a souvenir of my charming savioress, of the lady to whom I owe my life!"

"Oh, if that is your reason for desiring to remain lame," replied Miss Schuyler, lightly. "You may as well pray for a complete recovery. Your rescue is entirely due to the sagacity of Edhem Pasha. And I don't believe a dog would appreciate such a tribute."

"Your modesty naturally leads you to make lightly of the service you performed," said Georgevitch. "But I know what you did, and I shall always be deeply grateful" and then, with great tact changing the subject, as though this were final and admitted no further discussion, he asked:

"I hope you have passed a quite pleasant summer? I heard of you from time to time through your friend, Miss Bates. In fact, I passed from her house frequently, to enquire of your news."

Miss Schuyler gave him a brief account of her movements during the summer, mentioning also

the fact that she had been to Paris after leaving Switzerland, though she did not tell him that she visited the latter city for the purpose of replenishing her wardrobe.

"I too, have been away for a month," said the Prince, "to the ancient seat of my fathers in Croatia, where the pure mountain air has been of much benefit for my convalescence, though I do not know that the seeing of the palace, now going to ruin, improved my spirits much. I must say, though, that the respect of the villagers, to whom our name is yet very honored, was very touching to me."

"It must fill you with sadness to visit the place," commented Jane, with real sympathy. "If I were you, I should not wish to go there at all."

"Perhaps I shall never again go. It is, of course, in vain, unless there were some hopes of buying it back, and that is of course impossible. Even if I should make the merchandise successfully, it would take many years to gain the necessary capital. But I have already made a too long call, I fear," rising. "Shall I have the pleasure of meeting you at Prince Constantine's this evening?"

"I have about decided to go," replied Miss Schuyler. "It is quite a select affair, is it not?"

"Very select. Only the Fifty-Two will be

there, and by virtue of this invitation you will become a member of that set."

"Then I shall certainly come!" laughed Jane. "I cannot let such an opportunity escape. And I shall always be grateful to you and Mr. Laselle for having procured me this and other delightful and interesting invitations. You are both of you doing everything in your power to make my stay in Athens pleasant. But you must not make it too pleasant, for I must not forget my work entirely."

"I— you have never done me the honor of telling me what your work is," observed the Prince, as he stooped to pick up his hat.

"Oh, I have a specialty," replied Jane glibly. "I am studying the draperies of Greek statues!"

To give truth to this explanation, which she had foreseen from the beginning would be demanded of her more than once, she was actually studying classical draperies.

Georgevitch bent low over her hand, with his accustomed exquisite grace.

"Au revoir à bientot!" he murmured, and passed out of the room.

His limp, which was quite perceptible, and which seemed a part of his charmingly melancholy manners, his ruined fortunes, and his hopeless future, wrung Jane's heart with a distinct twinge of compassion.

## CHAPTER XVI

### *And Becomes a Member of the "Fifty-Two"*

LASELLE escorted Miss Schuyler to Prince Constantine's.

The beautiful white palace, situated far back in a great park, was brilliantly illuminated when their carriage turned in at the big iron gate and proceeded leisurely up the gravelled driveway, one link in a long chain of carriages and automobiles that begun in the road, stretched through the park to the doors of the palace itself, thence down the other side to another gate, and out into the street of Herodes Atticus again. All pleasure loving, voluble, excitable Athens was out, and as the wheels scrunched in the fine gravel, silvery volleys of feminine laughter burst forth from the closed vehicles, as bird songs from cages, and snatches of eager chattering could be heard, in all the languages of Europe, but mainly in the love-making tongues, Greek, Italian, French. As each coach or automobile drew up before the entrance of the building, women stepped out in dainty scarfs, and little feet clad in white slippers tripped up the wide marble steps, with much rustling of lace and whispering of silk; and these disappeared

within the spacious hall, accompanied by cavaliers in evening dress, or brilliant uniforms, military, naval or diplomatic.

"I understood this was to be a gathering of the Fifty-Two," remarked Jane, "but it seems to me that the number of invited amount to more nearly five thousand."

"Oh, not that many," replied Laselle, laughing lightly. "It really won't be such a very big party. No crowd is ever so big as it seems. For instance, if there were six hundred people in this line, with an average of four in each conveyance, that would make one hundred and fifty carriages, and six hundred people are not at all crowded in Prince Constantine's palace. Beside, it's only fifty-two that count. When Royalty are present, only those who can dance with them or in their sets, or talk with them, really take part in the festivities. All the others spend the whole evening in trying to get near Royalty or attract its attention."

"Well, I don't intend to pass my evening that way," said Jane stoutly, "I mean to have a good time, and if you don't dance with me, Wash, I'll cut you dead the next time I meet you. I make this announcement now, for the reason that I haven't the least idea in the world that Royalty will even so much as look at me."

"If Royalty thinks you are a poor school marm, it probably will not look at you," re-

marked the Secretary, "but if it has learned that you are wealthy Miss Schuyler, leader of New York and Newport Society, you are likely to be an immense success."

"Then I shall not even be so much as looked at, for no one has the slightest suspicion as to who I am. How exciting this living incog, is!"

"Well," pursued Laselle, "you can't hope to keep it up long if you appear in many such stunning Paris gowns as that. The avis schoolmarm doesn't usually wear such fine feathers."

"I'm glad the fastidious and discriminating Mr. Laselle approves of it," said Jane, "for it was designed by Paquin himself, and cost a lot of money that ought to have been given to the poor."

It was a beautiful dress, and as Jane now stepped out of the carriage and started up the marble stairs, not a few pairs of eyes glanced at her admiringly, for she was one of those women between whom and fine gowns there is a sort of mutual compact, each displaying the other to the best advantage. She was that most beautiful thing on earth, a tall, lithe, athletic woman, yet deep of chest and rounded where nature intended that a woman should be, and her arms, though strong and firm from much holding of bridle reins and swinging of golf clubs, were not lumpy nor sinewy, and they, as well as her neck, were as white as the single

camelia in her abundant straw-colored hair, that was parted simply in the middle and drawn down low over her ears.

Her gown was of filmy heliotrope silk, embroidered by hand in silver thread. She wore a necklace of large diamonds and her shoulders were covered with a long scarf of Burcano lace.

After giving their wraps to a magnificent flunky in the lower hall, Laselle and Jane became part of a stream of humanity that was flowing up another staircase, and they soon arrived at a landing where Prince Constantine and his consort, assisted by a number of ladies and gentlemen in waiting, were receiving their guests.

His Highness was a big, manly looking Prince, and he held out his hand to the Secretary with great cordiality.

"Good evening, Laselle," he said, "glad you could come! Had you gotten here a little earlier, you would have avoided the crush on the stairs. I never could understand why people all arrive at a ball at the same moment, as though they had been shot out of a blunderbuss."

"Your Royal Highness commanded us to come at nine," replied the Secretary, "and here we are."

He bowed low over the Princess' hand, and presented Jane.

"Your Royal Highness, Miss Vandervoert; Your Royal Highness, Miss Vandervoert, of Philadelphia."

Being a trained diplomat, Laselle did not make the mistake of presenting their Royal Highnesses to Jane, as some other American representatives would have done, thereby provoking an amused smile on the part of those standing near. These small matters are really of great importance in diplomacy, for when a Secretary or Ambassador causes amusement by his gauchness, his country becomes ridiculous.

Jane shook hands with both their Highnesses.

"Do you dance?" asked the Princess, amiably.

"I am very fond of dancing, Your Highness," replied Jane.

"Ah, then you must dance much, and enjoy yourself. Our cavaliers will be delighted to find a lady with whom they can dance the real Bostone."

All Americans in Europe are supposed to dance the "Bostone," which is nothing more nor less than a simple waltz.

"You must be careful," continued Her Highness, as Miss Schuyler moved away, "that the officers do not catch their spurs in that pretty gown and tear it."

"What did you think of them?" asked Laselle, as they entered a long and lofty hall,

indented by deep alcoves, where real wood fires were burning in great hearths, and broad sofas and easy chairs invited to conversation or repose.

"That they are just as simple and cordial as can be. They put one at ease immediately. If they were not Princes, they might have been Americans."

No house designed for hospitality and entertaining is at all complete unless it contains many cosy and semi-secret nooks for flirtation. These are just as necessary in high society as rooms for bridge, music, dancing or dinner. The key to being a successful host or hostess is to let one's guests do what amuses them most, to provide facilities for such amusement, and to make sure that one does not bore them, or that they do not bore each other. People usually derive amusement from whatever affords them pleasureable excitement, and worldlings, more or less blase, find little of that in anything which has not a touch of danger, perhaps wickedness, in it. Herein lies the chief consolation of religion for many society people: It adds a spice of wickedness to diversions essentially innocent, but forbidden by the church.

Some people enjoy gambling, while others, of higher spiritual and intellectual development, cannot live without flirting, and the architect as well as the host, must bear this in mind.

Jane did not sit down with Laselle in any of the deep alcoves where the wood fires were burning, for there was no acknowledgment of sentimentality in their intercourse.

"Take me about the palace, Wash, whispered she, "and show me as much of it as you can. It isn't often that an American girl gets into the real palace of a real prince. I want to see where the 'palace' comes in. To me, so far, it looks like a fine residence. If this were on Riverside Drive or Fifth Avenue, and belonged to an American millionaire, it would be a 'house'."

"It is the magic presence of royalty which transforms it into a palace," explained Laselle, infected by her girlish enthusiasm. "But come on, let us stroll about and look at the rooms. There's a really fine painting of Queen Victoria that I want to show you first."

"You're sure it isn't an enchanted palace," she whispered, looking in his face solemnly, "and that we shan't go to sleep for a thousand years, or be turned into pigs or something?"

"By Jove! what palaces we used to read about, and believed in too, twenty years ago, and here, for the first time in our lives we find ourselves together in one. Does the real thing come up to your expectation, Jane?"

"It was fifteen years ago," she replied.

They had not finished their tour of inspection ere the last of the guests arrived, and the Prince and Princess, followed by their suite, entered and moved slowly down the hall. The other guests flowed after them, and for several minutes a steady stream of humanity poured into the vast ball room. The Princely couple, augmented now by several other members of the royal family, including the Queen, took place in a group under the musicians' gallery.

They were immediately joined by the Corps of Fifty-Two, the crême de la crême, with the less intimate but nevertheless well established members standing a little farther away and a score or more of the would-be's crowding in as close as decency permitted, and watching with agonized alertness for some sign, albeit the slightest, of favorable recognition. Others of the last named class seized strategic points where Royalty was sure to pass and stand later on during the evening, and held them with tireless determination and grim resolve.

And it was a game worth fighting for, from the social climbers' point of view: for in a small European capital social position is absolutely fixed by Royal favor. In such a community mental attainments, personal distinction, even family, often take back seats, and persons who could never penetrate the élite of a democratic city suddenly find themselves at

the pinnacle of social success. Thus often does the absolutism of royalty work democratic wonders not possible in a democracy itself.

In the meanwhile the other guests spread out over the wide floor, and the hum of conversation was suddenly lost in the strains of a lively waltz.

At a nod from the princely host, the Beau Brummel of the Court, the leader of all élite dances for the last forty years, seized a General's daughter standing near as suddenly and fiercely as a tiger leaps upon its prey, and literally lifting her from her dainty feet, went whirling through the crowd with her, his sword and her draperies whizzing about the couple by the force of centrifugal expulsion while the Fifty-Two followed his evolutions with polite admiration.

And he was a wonder, was Gastaldes. There was in all Europe no more ingenious cotillion leader, or more indefatigable and impetuous round dancer. With his slender figure, his heavy moustache, up-curled at the ends and dyed jet black, his excellent false teeth, he looked a cavalier of thirty when raging invincible over a ball-room floor or riding down Stadium street, daintily bestriding his charger. Yet he owned to sixty-five years, and uncharitable tongues said he was seventy if a day.

There had been serious thought fifteen or twenty years ago of dispossessing him of his post of court dancing master and putting a younger man in the place. The effort had been made two or three times, with the result that the function had threatened to be a failure, till Gastaldes had rushed into the breach like a beloved officer when a battle is being lost, and had saved the fight. For the last decade, as he had shown no signs of waning strength or diminishing ingenuity, he had grown to be regarded as a permanent institution, an archaeological monument perhaps, but an immortal monument, like the Acropolis, or the Temple of Theseus.

It was his duty now to open up a space for dancing, and, as he widened out his whizzing orbit, the people laughingly scrambled for the sides and corners of the room.

Soon, in the space thus created, other couples were dancing, and the ball was in full swing.

Jane, with Laselle, stood watching from the steps leading down into the ball room. He had just been recounting to her the main facts in Gastaldes' history, and she, incredible as to the monument's age, had expressed a desire to get nearer to the latter to see how well he wore his years at close range.

"The only way to accomplish your purpose," observed Laselle, "is to join the dancers. Miss Vandervoert, may I have the pleasure of this waltz?"

"Will you waltz or whizz?" asked Jane.

"Both," replied the Secretary.

"I accept, with fear and trembling," said Jane. "I should really like to waltz, if you haven't forgotten how in the last ten years."

"Twenty-five" corrected Laselle.

She had just taken his arm, when a young exquisite in the dress uniform of an officer of infantry presented himself before them and bowed.

"Good evening, Mr. Laselle," he said, in French, "I am glad you were in so conspicuous a place, as it has been easy to find you. Her Royal Highness, the Princess Nica, commands you to waltz with her."

Laselle glanced at his companion quizzically.

"I must appear to go eagerly," he murmured in English, "A-a command, you know—"

She instantly released his arm.

"I hope you step on Her Highness' Royal toe!" she laughed.

As Laselle moved away with the young officer, Georgevitch came up, in the uniform of a Hungarian Colonel of infantry, which was wonderfully becoming to him. She had never seen him look so distinguished, so thoroughly the aristocrat.

"Pardon, Miss Vandervoert," he said, bowing low, "if I seek to take advantage of the occasion. I could not help overhearing your conversation with Mr. Laselle. Will you allow me to supply him in the waltz?"

"Certainly," replied Jane, with genuine pleasure.

They had not time to take more than a turn or two, before the music ceased, but that was enough to reveal to the Philadelphian that he was an exquisite dancer; and then Georgevitch led her right up into the very core of the Fifty Two, and one of the King's sons glanced admiringly at her and asked her for the first quadrille. Thus Jane became herself a member of the Athens Fifty-Two.

## CHAPTER XVII

### *The Diplomats Have Another Little Game of Bridge*

PEOPLE who live in democratic countries, whose time is consumed in pursuing the real things of life, as they suppose, cannot understand what meaning those little words convey: "She is dancing with the Prince!" to the inhabitants of a royal capital. It makes little difference whether this particular scion of majesty be a youthful demigod, or whether he be a ridiculous little monkey, impossible save as a prince, (for there are princes and *princes,* the effect, the triumph, the glory, are the same.

Jane did not for the moment realize. She found herself dancing an extremely jolly and rather lively quadrille of the European style consisting of eight or ten couples on each of the four sides, with a tall young fellow in simple evening dress, good-natured and intelligent, who spoke English perfectly and who seemed bent on enjoying himself, and in giving healthful vent to his overflowing, youthful spirits. With him, too, she felt quite at ease immediately, and in vein to answer brightly his good-natured sallies. Only one thing prevented her from imagining herself for the moment at one of the great houses

at Philadelphia, or at an Astor or Vanderbilt cotillion; in the long line opposite her stood the majestic and gracious figure of Queen Olga, daughter of a dozen Czars, her head surmounted by a crown, blazing with diamonds. She was every inch a Queen and as she moved through the quadrille with sweet and stately dignity, Jane understood the meaning of the words, "Your Majesty," and every time she glanced at her, she realized more easily that she was actually dancing in the same set with a King and a Queen, several princes and princesses, and a grand Duke and Duchess.

To have gained the privilege of entertaining the least important of the personages chatting, laughing and dancing near her, the hostesses of Newport would have moved heaven and earth; and her end once gained, the victor would have guarded her captive as the tiger holds its prey, purring and growling, lavishing millions on Sardanapalian hospitality and thousands on the newspapers.

It is the fear of being torn limb from limb that prevents real royalty from visiting our American social centers; for what less could it expect when it reads or hears of the desperate scrimmages over the pseudo princes and second-rate nobles who submit to being exploited?

As Jane now gave her hand to the Queen, or was "swung" by the King, or went chasséing

back to place with her partner, numerous feminine eyes were fixed upon her, and not a few pairs of these gleamed balefully. More than one resolution was formed to find out something about her, detrimental to her reputation if possible, and tongues began to wag even before anything was known.

"She must be rich, of course, all Americans are."

"Georgewitch introduced her to their Royal Highnesses."

"Where is Georgevitch?"

"If she isn't rich, where did she get that expensive gown? Who bought it for her?" Ha! Perhaps there was a clue?

"How vulgar these Americans are! How bold! They force themselves in while people of old family and real merit remain modestly in the background."

This last was said by the unsuccessful climbers.

"She is not beautiful. Her face is too red and she has arms like a washerwoman."

"Who knows? Perhaps her mother was a washerwoman. One can never tell about these Americans."

"The Prince will soon tire of her, and then nobody will speak to her," observed one, from bitter experience.

"She need not hold her head so high."

So much for the ladies. The men on the other hand, were admiring Jane unreservedly, and all the dandies were laying plans to make her acquaintance and dance with her.

While Jane was hobnobbing with Royalty and exciting the curiosity, envy and admiration of fashionable Athens, the representatives of four of the Great Powers were playing another game of bridge in a small room off the great hall.

"I suggest, Chers Colleques," said Von Alutius, as he extracted a cigarette from the solid gold case, shut it and caressed for a moment the Imperial coat of arms with his thumb, "that we play bridge tonight, and do not talk politics."

"Nobody would have thought of politics," laughed Sir James Winter, glancing shrewdly at the first speaker over his cards, which he was arranging, "if Von Alutius hadn't referred to them. I make it spades."

"There's no need of playing spades," said Troyanski.

"Just a moment, just a moment!" objected Stranograde, running his fingers through his thin grey hair, "I—I double spades."

"In that case," said Troyanski, "I suppose we must play."

Count Von Alutius laid down his cards, face up, and settled his corpulent form comfortably

back in his easy chair. Fixing his blue eyes musingly on the ceiling, he blew in the same direction a cloud of smoke, incredible in volume when one reflected that it was produced by the combustion of the slender cigarette which he had extracted from the gold case.

The hand was soon played, for Baron Stranograde held all the best cards in the pack.

"Little Slam," cried the latter joyfully. Von Alutius took a last deep pull at his cigarette and crushed the stub down into an ash tray. The winner was in high spirits.

"We have smokeless mausers," he laughed, glancing at the cloud above his partner's head, "smokeless cannon, smokeless chimneys, but no one has as yet invented a smokeless—"

"German," finished the Count, amiably.

"I protest; I was not going to say anything so personal. Cigarette. It's my deal, I hope I do as well on my deal as I did on yours, Sir James."

They played perhaps for an hour, intent upon the game, while strains of music, discoursed by the distant orchestra, gay, dreamy or passionate, floated in through the open door.

It was Sir James Winter who first interrupted the keenness of the play. Two Secretaries of Legation, standing near the table, had been observing the game and talking in a low tone, of Jane, in Hungarian.

"She danced three times with Prince Andreas," said one, "and talked for ten minutes with the King, who has a keener eye for beauty than any of his sons."

"Her success is enormous," observed the other. "Georgevitch, lucky dog, took her out for refreshments, and is even now having a tete-a-tete with her in an alcove. Is it her beauty, do you think?"

"Perhaps her wit, or personal magnetism, I am very anxious to have a talk with her."

"Is she now with Georgevitch?"

"Let us stroll down the hall and see."

As they moved away, Sir James remarked, quietly.

"The Tarachian question must be settled. The condition of the province is quite anomalous. It no longer owns allegiance to Turkey, no neighboring power dares take possession, and it is not strong enough to declare its independence. A coup d'etat on the part of some of the petty Balkan States might throw all Europe into war."

He spoke of high matters as a man with authority, and the resemblance to a country parson dropped from his face as a mask.

"I knew you were a great linguist," observed Troyanski admiringly, "but had no idea that you understood Hungarian."

Sir James glanced at him shrewdly.

"Yes, I was thinking of Georgevitch," he replied. "He is the one candidate upon whom we have all agreed, and," he smiled sweetly, "you know, you all know, what a miracle has been accomplished when we all actually agree on anything!"

"Well!" said Stranograde, caressing thoughtfully his large thin nose with forefinger and thumb, a habit of his when deeply interested.

"We must settle upon a wife for Georgevitch. Should he seek to retrieve his fortunes by marrying a rich American, I could no longer support him. The new Principality, the embryo kingdom, needs strong alliances. Georgevitch gone, we should have to get together on the so-called Prince of Tarachia, whom I regard as too turbulent, too intractable, too dangerous."

Von Alutius extracted the gold cigarette case from his vest pocket, and gazed affectionately at the coat-of-arms.

"My Imperial Master," he observed, finally, "regards the anomalous position of the province as a fait accompli!"

Herr Ivan Troyanski was a Tartar, as appeared from his high cheek bones, his thin slits of eyes, his sparse, stiff moustache, now white. He was a solidly built, short man, and his terra cotta colored face was slightly marked by smallpox.

"Georgevitch is himself related to the reigning family of Austria," he remarked, "so nothing would be gained by marrying him to an Austrian princess. The royal family which he shall found must, as Sir James says, have strong alliances. A dynasty is a great tree that must have roots all over Europe."

"The dynasty represented by my Imperial Master," commented Von Alutius, "is a tree that has its head in the clouds, for the Hochenstaters are of divine origin!"

Troyanski bowed low over the table, with his hand on his heart.

"And Your Excellency's Imperial Master is one of the worthiest branches on that ancient and glorious tree. Georgevitch could scarcely hope to make so brilliant an alliance. Now, My Imperial Master has, as you know, several brothers, who have no hopes of reigning, and these have daughters, who would gladly add to the title of Grande Duchesse that of reigning Princess and possibly Queen. It is only necessary—"

"But there are also collateral branches of our Imperial family," interrupted Von Alutius, as soon as he caught the drift of his colleague's remarks. Giving a Princess to Georgevitch meant the acquiring of special influence in Tarachia, closer trade relations, valuable concessions in this rich tract that was only waiting favorable conditions for development.

The battle was now on in earnest, the bloodless yet keen and exciting struggle of diplomacy as to which of the Great Powers should acquire strongest hold upon the little kingdom which they had decided to erect; and each of these four wily and perfectly trained schemers felt that the next important step was to put a Princess of his own country on the vacant throne at Georgevitch's elbow, or, failing that, to secure some important concession in recompense.

As they talked, they understood that the time had come when a decision must be reached. Sir James, in fact, who sat shuffling the cards, silently, and eyeing the speakers with those keen grey eyes of his, realized that a conclusion could be reached. He therefore proposed that they all leave, unostentatiously and one by one, and meet at the British Legation within an hour, to continue the discussion, if need be, till morning. This accordingly was done.

## CHAPTER XVIII

### *A Prince of Love Makers*

WHERE, meanwhile, was the unconscious subject of this important conversation? He was sitting with Miss Schuyler in one of the deep and dimly lighted alcoves off the long hall, talking to her in a low tone. His voice had a certain thrilling quality, and he looked very noble, entirely at home here in the palace, among the great of the earth according to old world standards. Jane's head was turned by all this royal attention, albeit she was dimly aware of the fact.

True to her obsession, the thought occurred to her that Georgevitch must have learned who she really was, but it failed for the moment to make a great impression on her. A man with his social position, she thought, associates as a matter of course with the wealthy and great.

"Do not think I am flattering you," murmured Georgevitch passionately, "but you are the most beautiful woman here tonight. The whole royal family is charmed with you. I have always thought you beautiful, but tonight I see that you are a goddess. Do you know," he continued sadly, "that, when I have seen that beautiful gown, those pearls, a terrible fear has seized pos-

session of me, a fear that you were some great lady incognito, some Princess or Grande Duchesse, and that so my romance would end!"

"Your romance?" asked Jane, wonderingly.

"Yes, because I am a child of misfortune—the last of a princely race, too poor to marry for love, and too proud to marry for interest. So I had thought never—never—to let you know," his voice broke at this point, "to go away quietly and to cherish your image in my heart all my life."

It was impossible to doubt his honesty, his nobility. Jane was deeply touched, but she was embarrassed in the face of so much sincerity, by the false part she was playing. She was sorry that she could not say to him, truthfully.

"I am what I claim to be, a schoolteacher of moderate means. In my country all men are princes, and work ennobles; come to America and be a man! Come to America, and work, and I will wait for you, all my life if necessary Nay, we will even work together, and the kingdom of love and mutual effort shall be ours!"

This she could not say, so she replied unheroically and descended to the cheapness of coquetry:

"You are all turning my head with too much flattery, and my beautiful gown is the cause of it all! But do not let that spoil your romance, Prince. I have a rich uncle who will

be delighted when he knows what a success my gown has been tonight!"

As they were talking, people strolled down the hall, and glanced into the alcove from time to time, but no one was rude enough to disturb them, they were evidently so deeply interested in each other.

Georgevitch's face fairly beamed with joy and relief. "So it has been a rich uncle that has presented you with the gown!" he said, almost fiercely. "Do you know what I have feared when I first saw you in it tonight?"

Jane turned suddenly pale, and sat up straight.

"What?" she asked sternly.

"No! No! Not that!" he exclaimed. "But you—you were a revelation, you were no longer the student of Archaeology, the professor in a woman's college. I feared that perhaps you had been married to some wealthy man, and that for some, some private or family reason you had not announced it yet. I—I feared of that!"

"And you still fear it?" asked Jane.

"Tell me that it is not so!" pleaded Georgevitch, in an agonized tone.

Jane was looking at the toe of her white dancing slipper.

"No, I am not married," she replied, softly, without looking up.

At this moment Laselle boldly approached them.

"I beg your pardon," he said pleasantly, "but the party is breaking up, and people are saying good night to our hosts."

Jane rose and took his arm; bidding Georgevitch good night, she went away with Laselle.

The Secretary was quite himself all the way to the Spiti, though Jane, for some reason, felt uncomfortable in his company.

At the door he said briskly:

"Oh, by the way, Jane, merely as an old friend, I hope that fellow Georgevitch isn't making a fool of you! He is the most accomplished lady-killer in Europe!"

"My friends," said Miss Schuyler, "do not talk to me like that!" and she disappeared within the house without saying good night.

## CHAPTER XIX

### *The Arrival of the Black Sheep*

YOUNG Schuyler, Cornelius Vandervoert Schuyler, arrived in Athens not long after the ball at the Crown Prince's. He was a short, thick-set youth, who stood very straight and held his chin high in air, giving the impression that he was trying to look as tall as anybody. He seemed to be standing on tip toe inside his shoes. His hair, that he wore close cropped, was a colorless blonde, as was his scanty and very fine moustache. His face was fat and round, and the tip of his retroussé nose pointed upward, as though it, too, disapproved of its master's short stature. A monocle, extra-size, engaged much of his attention, for he had a habit of sticking it very frequently into one of his watery blue eyes, and attempting to hold it there by wrinkling one side of his forehead down and one fat cheek up. The effort was always unsuccessful, however, and the monocle popped out and dropped to the end of its cord, when he would fumble aimlessly after it, and stick it back again.

His father had left him $1,200 a year and had enjoined Jane, on his death bed, to look after the young man and see that he always had as much money as was good for him, and no more.

His presence in the capital of Greece was the result of much scheming on Jane's part, who gave many a sleepless hour to projects for interesting the young man in some sort of work, of finding a "career" for him, in fact. She had hoped that the prospect of making himself a diplomat might appeal to the young man's sense of self-respect, and that the delicate and absorbing problems of the work might occupy his mind sufficiently to take it away from the foolish and vicious pursuits which had up till now engaged his undivided attention. In this she had been encouraged and abetted by Laselle. Through the influence of a senator, an old friend of her father's, she had succeeded in getting him appointed attache of legation at Athens without salary.

This done, Laselle undertook to look out for the young man, to aid him in his studies, and, by precept and example, to do all in his power to mold the attache's character and set him on the right track.

How solemnly Laselle took his responsibility in this connection to heart, will appear from the sequel.

In Athens Schuyler was not long in getting in with the fast set and the young gamblers of a town as devoted to gaming as the inhabitants of a Sioux Indian village hailed his advent in their midst with delight. Jane did not

see much of him for the first few weeks after his arrival, for the reason that he was, on the whole, a pretty successful poker player and he rarely sought his sister's society except when he wanted money.

Schuyler, in fact, had a steady run of luck for about two weeks in a small room of "The Club," before he met with his first serious disaster. Poker was the game, American poker, and he had the satisfaction of showing the natives several particulars in which they had been playing the game wrong. He became, indeed, an authority, and whenever a dispute arose, "Ask Schuyler," was the cry, "he's an American."

He played poker all night, and slept nearly all day, and as he invariably found himself from one thousand to five thousand francs ahead in the morning, he began to look upon Athens as a highly civilized city.

It must be said, in justice to the Athenians, however, that he won very little from them. They are too clever to be beaten long at any kind of a game.

The person who contributed most steadily to Schuyler's winnings was an Attache of legation, a sort of Fourth Secretary, a man who, like Schuyler himself, had arrived lately, a charming affable fellow, who looked about thirty, but was probably ten years older. This

man also did not seem to have much of anything to do except play cards, and he was something of a mystery. He was intelligent enough, and yet it was hard to understand how he could have reached such an age and have been so many years in a perfectly organized and graded service, without having got farther along. He was a tall, lean, powerfully built man, with a thin face, upcurling moustache, steel grey eyes and very white teeth.

He drank enormously, everything liquid that contained a certain percentage of alcohol, and insisted on everybody present drinking with him. He would get hilarious or be muddled with the rest, and then had a way of suddenly becoming perfectly sober, which had been noted on several occasions and commented on by those who did not drink.

This man lost so steadily to Schuyler and with such good grace, that the latter, as a recognized authority, began to give him advice.

"No really, my deah fellah," he would say, "you really mustn't back up a poor hand so deuced strong. You really mustn't, you know. Bluffing is all right, don't you know, but you mustn't try it too often. Poker, real poker, consists in knowing when you've got a good hand, and then standing for it—that's poker."

Schuyler was as nearly happy as it is possible for a man of his calibre to be, when delivering

these sage discourses, leaning back in his leather chair, at the club, with his nose tip-tilted in the air.

"It's a game worth learning," Nelidoff would reply, "and one must pay to learn it. I've played it in every capital in Europe, and supposed I knew it, but I assure you, gentlemen, I never met a real master of the game before. Let us have a drink to brighten up our wits for the next hand."

In conversing with Schuyler, Nelidoff used perfect English, and in general it was observed of him that he replied to any one who addressed him in the language used by that person, speaking all the tongues of Europe with absolute command and without the least foreign accent.

According to Schuyler, Nelidoff's chief fault as a poker player lay in the fact that he did not know the value of the hands. He would "call" on four aces, for instance, after having only bet ten francs on them.

"Why, my dear fellah," Schuyler would cry, "when you get four of a kind you should stand by 'em, don't you know." Then he would screw his monocle into his eye, to make sure that they actually were four aces. "Of course, the other fellow might have something higher, but as a general principle, don't you know, if you always back up four of a kind to the last shot in the locker, you will come out ahead, and four aces—my gawd!"

On such occasions Nelidoff would take a small note-book from his pocket, detach a gold pencil from his watch chain, and "make a note of it."

"I will study these points afterward," he would say, "and I know where I shall take my revenge. There is a certain crowd in Stockholm —let us drink to their discomfiture."

One night Nelidoff had lost about three hundred francs, and other members of the party smaller sums, mostly to Schuyler, before whom lay several stacks of chips that grew steadily.

Then, suddenly, something happened. There were two or three good hands out, it seemed, and their owners staid in until nearly all of Schuyler's chips found their way into the middle of the table. He had four kings, it was two A. M. and he had been drinking and smoking and winning since ten P. M., and he felt invincible. The betting grew stiffer and everybody dropped out except the American, a Greek cotton merchant from Egypt, and Nelidoff.

"I raise it five hundred francs," said the cotton merchant. Nelidoff looked troubled. He glanced at Schuyler, then took out his note-book, opened it and studied for a moment. Schuyler set him down in his mind for a full hand, or four tens, perhaps. He stayed in.

Before he could speak, the cotton merchant raised it five hundred back, and Nelidoff replied by raising it one thousand. The cotton merchant hesitated and dropped out.

Schuyler found himself alone in the game with Nelidoff.

"If it was anybody but you, my dear fellow," said the former, "I'd raise you one thousand, but really, you'd better take my advice, don't you know, and lay down."

"What do you mean?" said Nelidoff, in a tone that caused the monocle to drop out of the watery blue eye, now regarding him almost with affection. "I trust you will play this game with me as you would with any other gentleman; I am quite able to pay any losses that I may incur."

"Why, certainly, my dear fellow. No offence was intended, I assure you. I--"

"Well, play the game then."

"Oh very well, I raise you one thousand."

"See you, and raise you one thousand."

"A thousand more!"

And so it went on, until suddenly the thought penetrated the liquor-inflamed and smoke-clouded brain of Schuyler that if he lost, he had not the money to pay. The other's eyes were fixed on him steadily, exercising a strange power over him. If he lost, and Jane refused to help him out, he would be confronted by the one disgrace he was capable of feeling most keenly —inability to meet his gambling obligations. The thought thrilled him with fear and brought him to his senses.

"I call you," he said.

"I hope that no consideration for me"—sneered Nelidoff.

"No, no, my dear fellow," apologized Schuyler, laying down his four kings, and then assuming again his professional tone, "but I have now supported my hand to its exact value, no more, no less."

"I believe I beat you, do I not?" asked the other, sweetly, putting down a straight flush on the board.

Schuyler bent over the hand and examined it carefully, forgetting his monocle, and his drawl.

"Yes, that beats me," he said hoarsely, "how much do I owe you?"

They counted up and found the sum to be a little less than fifteen thousand francs, about three thousand dollars in American money.

Schuyler wrote an I. O. U. for the amount, signed it and handed it to the other.

"I shan't get up in time to get into the bank in the morning," he said. "I will bring you the money at 5 o'clock in the afternoon."

"Oh don't put yourself out in the least, my dear fellow," begged Nelidoff, now affability itself again. "Come to dinner with me tomorrow night at the Grande Bretagne and you can bring me a check then."

As Schuyler walked back to his rooms in the early morning, the first faint promise of dawn was beginning to steal into the sky, where the great stars were shining with increased brilliancy, as though aware that their reign was nearly over. An occasional market cart, laden with fresh vegetables, was coming in from the Attic plain or the regions about Kephyssia, and vendors of saleppi, a warm drink made of herbs, were already seizing the most advantageous corners and setting down their brass samovars, hung with jingling cups.

The chanticleers, too, had commenced their antiphonal chorus from one end of the town to the other, and the birds in the gardens, and bushes of Kephyssia street were shaking out their wings with many dainty flutterings, and peeping, announcing to their fellows that another day was near.

To young Schuyler the coming day brought but one thought: he had incurred a debt which he must find the money for before tomorrow night, or blow his brains out.

A gentleman can shirk any kind of a responsibility except his gambling debts.

Of course, it would be easy to win this money back and much more from Nelidoff, he reflected, who was an easy mark, but in the meantime this three thousand dollars must be found.

## CHAPTER XX

### *One Kind of a Gentleman*

WHILE the cool air of the early morning was blowing upon the fevered brow of Schuyler, as he walked to his rooms, after his unfortunate night of cards, his sister was sleeping soundly. She arose early for a lady of her wealth and position, about eight, that is to say, and rang for her coffee and rolls.

When she went into her sitting room a few minutes later, in response to the maid's gentle tap at the door, she found on the neatly spread table a bouquet of wild cyclamens, beautiful, fresh and fragrant.

"Where did these lovely flowers come from?" she asked Antigone, the maid. "How fragrant they are!" she cried, ecstatically, picking them up and inhaling their dainty perfume.

"Spiro brought them," explained Antigone. "They are savage. We have savage flowers, you know, all days of the year, in the Greece. He picked them from the mountains."

"Tell Spiro they are lovely, and I was delighted with them, but he must not spend so much of his time gathering flowers for me."

"I have already seized the liberty of telling

it to him, but he says he loves to bring you things, but there are no flowers in the Greece enough beautiful for giving to you. He says he will bring a Kossifos soon to the Despineda," (lady).

"And what is a Kossifos?"

"It is a little bird, who sings beautifully. Spiro has made a little house for it, of osiers."

Jane saw Spiro very seldom, as he came early in the morning with his milk, and left before she got about for the day. She was kept aware of his existence, however, by frequent gifts such as one of Theocritus' shepherds might have bestowed on the object of his fancy: anemones or cyclamen from the slopes and nooks of Hymettus, squares of sweet cream for her morning coffee, a bowl of curds, basil in a pot, or sprigs of fragrant wild plants.

These offerings being without pecuniary value, and yet pleasing, she accepted as polite attentions on the part of an untutored swain, and they were gratifying to her. Priscilla's suggestion in the letter written to St. Beatembearg, that he was in love with her, seemed to her the sheerest nonsense. Priscilla was such a dear old simpleton!

While Jane took her coffee, the maid was busy in the bed room, and Jane had forgotten the girl's existence. She was reminded of it about half an hour later, by the girl's asking,

"May he bring the Kossifos, Despines? I will care for it everyday, and you will see that it shall sing like one angel!"

Now the possession of any living thing is more or less of a responsibility and Jane hesitated before replying. She was saved the pains by the arrival of her brother, who entered her sitting room without knocking.

"Good morning, Jane," he said, "I'm glad I found you up."

She took a good long look at him and understood that he was in trouble and wanted money, and her face blanched. She was always expecting that he would get into some scrape or other, some really serious mess and cause a great scandal.

"What is it now, Conny?" she asked. her voice betraying displeasure and fear.

"Oh, you needn't look at me in that tone of voice," he whined. "You treat me as if I were a criminal, a blooming criminal, don't you know. Yes, you treat me as if I were a criminal! You might at least ask me to have a cup of coffee. I'm the only brother you've got. There's just me and you, Jane, brother and sister, and you don't even ask me to have a cup of coffee!"

"Antigone!" called Jane. "Antigone! Bring some hot coffee immediately and some fresh rolls, and now," as the girl went out of the

room, "do tell me what the matter is. What trouble have you got into?"

"Who said there was any trouble?" replied Cornelius, peevishly, sitting down upon the edge of a chair. "Can't a brother come to see his only sister without her suspecting him of being in trouble?"

"Well, you certainly look as if you were in some terrible scrape," said Jane, unconvinced. "You are nervous and ill at ease, and I don't believe you've had any sleep! You know, Cornie," she continued, gently, "that I'm always glad to see you, but you never come near me lately, unless you're in some sort of a pickle, or want money."

"Well," he replied, "whom should I come to when I want money, if not to you? You've got millions, your share and mine, too, and I'm a pauper!"

"I never refuse you money for any good object—I never have yet, and I wish to heaven you would conduct yourself in a way that would justify me in giving you a half of everything, and done with it. Why don't you quit gambling and drinking and—and your other vices, Cornie," she pleaded, "and take up some serious pursuit in life?"

"Like you do," he sneered, "balls and dances, and silly romances—flirting under an assumed name!"

Jane blushed.

"If you want anything of me," she said, "you won't help your cause any by making me angry. What, in heaven's name, is it?"

"Nothing—that is, nothing of any importance, and besides girls don't understand these things, anyway!"

Antigone brought in the coffee and, setting it on the table, waited for further orders.

Cornelius screwed his monocle into his eyes and stared fixedly into the bottom of his cup.

Jane sent the servant away immediately.

"There is something, then?" she pleaded, nervously, serving his coffee.

"No cream and no sugar," he directed, "and fill the cup please. Why, there is, and there isn't, just according to the way you look at it. You see, I've joined the Gentlemen's Club here. I had to. All the ministers and secretaries belong, and naturally, I sat in at a little game of poker. Everybody plays—every gentleman does—"

"And you lost a lot of money,"

"Now Jane, how you jump at a fellow! Who said I lost a lot of money, I did lose a little, and I've got to pay it tonight."

"How much was it,"

"Only fifteen thousand francs" he blurted out, "nothing for you, or for me either, if I had been fairly dealt with."

Into Jane's eyes there came a look of pity, but her lips set in a firm line.

"I can't let you have this money, Cornie," she said, gently, "you know what a horror our father had of gambling, and almost his dying injunction was that his money should not go for such a purpose. It was your weakness for gambling that caused him to think it unsafe to entrust you with large sums."

"Please let me have it, Jane," he pleaded, "my honor is at stake. A gentleman must pay his gambling debts, don't you know. He must, really."

"But a gentleman doesn't gamble for larger sums than he is sure he can pay, and I want you to distinctly understand, in fact, I have already plainly stated to you, that I shall not be responsible for money that you lose at cards."

"You won't help me out then?"

"Not in cases of this kind. I'm sorry, Cornie, but my refusing is the only way I can make you understand that I mean what I say."

"Very well, then," he cried, springing to his feet, and raising his voice. "I am driven to a gentleman's only resource. If I do not have this money by 7 o'clock I shall blow my brains out, and I shall leave a note stating who you are, and explaining that you had my money and that you refused to let me have a little of it to pay a debt of honor."

Jane turned pale.

"I don't think you will be fool enough to kill yourself. You will rather, I hope, learn a lesson and be shamed into refraining from gambling in the future. Oh, Cornie," she pleaded, rising and approaching him, "why won't you be a man? Your father was a great man, a noble man. Why don't you try to be more like him?"

At this moment someone knocked at the door, and Jane, thinking it to be Antigone, to take away the coffee things, cried "Come in!"

Washington Laselle entered, and advanced toward Jane with hand extended. Suddenly he stopped, and looked inquiringly at brother and sister.

"I beg your pardon," he apologized, "if I am intruding on a private conversation. But I distinctly heard someone say "Come in!"

"I—I thought it was the maid," stammered Jane.

"Oh, then, I will call at some other time. Good morning, Jane, Good morning, Schuyler."

In addressing Jane, his tone was solicitous, almost tender. At Schuyler he glanced and spoke sharply, as though comprehending that the latter had been causing his sister unhappiness. At the door he hesitated for a moment.

"Might I presume upon the privilege of an old friend," he asked, "to inquire if I can be of any assistance, by advice or otherwise,"

"Thank you, Wash, you can't be of any help," replied Jane. "We only—"

But young Schuyler was seized by a sudden inspiration.

"I say, Laselle," he cried, "Don't go away! You can help a fellow out, don't you know. The fact is, I lost a little sum at cards last night, at the Club, poker, don't you know, only fifteen thousand francs, and gave my I. O. U. for it to Nelidoff. I must have the money today."

Laselle whistled.

"Fifteen thousand francs! That's steep, even for the club. Well, I'm afraid I can't help you; I couldn't raise fifteen thousand francs today to save my life."

"And do you mean to say that you would let him have it, if you could raise it?" asked Jane.

"As an old friend of—of the family, I suppose I should have to," replied Laselle. "He must pay it, you know."

"You see how gentlemen think about such things," said Cornelius. "Laselle, like myself, is a gentleman."

The gentleman referred to bowed with his hand upon his heart, and smiled not too pleasantly.

"But it was because his father feared that he would become an inveterate gambler, that he did not intrust his money to him, and he enjoined me not to give him money for gambling."

"Nevertheless, if his father were living, he would pay this debt. He would doubtless take severe measures to prevent a recurrence, but he would pay this debt," repeated Laselle.

"If you'll only pay for me this time, Jane," cried Cornelius, hoarse with eagerness, "I swear to God I will never ask you to again."

"Will you promise never to touch cards again, Connie, so long as you live?" asked Jane, with the good woman's inexhaustible credulity.

"I promise, hand upon heart; I swear it, on the honor of a gentleman."

Jane sat down at a small escritoire, took out her check book and wrote a check to the order of Cornelius Schuyler for fifteen thousand francs.

"I would have given a good deal more than that to get that promise out of you, Cornie," she said, "and to be sure that you would keep it. Remember, I give you this money only because you have promised to quit gambling. I also swear, and I call Mr. Laselle to witness, that you shall never have another cent of your father's money from me, for such a purpose. In case you should break your promise, it will be useless for you to come to me."

Nevertheless, she looked pleased as she handed him the check. She had at last, she thought, found her brother's better side: it was his "honor as a gentleman." He would keep his

word with her, thus sworn to, as he had thought it necessary to keep it with Nelidoff.

"Thanks, old girl," he cried, seizing the check, and kissing her affectionately. "Thanks, Laselle, you have saved my life, by Jove, don't you know!" and he was gone.

"Don't worry too much about the kid," said Laselle, kindly. "He's young yet, and is sowing his wild oats. He'll settle down some time, and become straight as a deacon, you'll see that he will."

"I wish I was sure of it," sighed Jane, "at any rate, it gives me great comfort to hear you say so. I am terribly worried about Cornie, and the more so as I cannot believe him entirely responsible for his actions. He was thrown from a horse about two years before his father's death, and I have always thought that he must have suffered a concussion of the brain at that time. It seems to me that I can see that his character began to change soon after. Our father did not take this charitable view. He was terribly severe on the subject of poor Cornie's weakness, and almost his last words were that he be given no money for gambling—or—or wildness of any kind."

The Secretary sat down, and, as he did so, Spiro's cyclamens caught his eye. Picking up the small vase, he smelled them.

"Fragrant things, those," he remarked, "and dainty. What a country this is, where such flowers bloom in February. Have you been taking any long walks, lately, Jane? did you pick these yourself?"

"No," she replied, mischievously, "an admirer sent them to me. He sends me flowers and things nearly every day."

Laselle's mind reverted immediately to Georgevitch, and the idea was extremely distasteful to him. As an old and sincere friend, he disapproved of Georgevitch in this connection. He remembered, however, Jane's resentment when he had spoken to her about the Prince on the evening of the ball, and feared that, if he prolonged his call, he would quarrel with her. He therefore excused himself on the ground of pressing business at the legation and left.

## CHAPTER XXI

*A Terrible Discovery*

THE American Legation was housed in an unpretentious building of respectable appearance on Homer Street. It had so recently removed there that the cabmen always took the visiting Americans who had need of it, first to the old address, then back to the hotel to get a guide, and thence to the Consulate, where definite information was received. The legations of the other great Powers were buildings as well known and as permanent as the University or the House of Parliament, but that of the greatest, most powerful and richest nation of all, had had a peripatetic and uncertain existence, having taken refuge on various occasions in hotels and boarding houses.

It had been forced to move thus often for various reasons: it was either too large or too small, too expensive or too cheap for the incoming man, or perhaps the landlord himself had other ideas, or had found a more profitable tenant.

In this case it was the wife of the owner who induced her husband to sign a lease with other parties, and order the American Legation out. She was a member of the "Fifty-Two," and

the minister's wife had not returned her call. This, of course, is the sort of thing which women in all countries take revenge for, sooner or later, though they do not always find their opportunity so promptly as did Mrs. Electra Calligas. True, it was the wife of the retiring minister who had committed the unpardonable sin, and it was the newly arrived envoy and his family who found themselves homeless, and put to no end of trouble to find a house, but that did not matter so much: Mrs. Calligas now hated the whole American race, and one member served as well as another for the purposes of her revenge.

Several days after young Schuyler's unsuccessful evening at poker, the Secretary of the Legation, now Charge d'Affaires, sat in the Chancellery, a basement room giving upon a pleasant garden, reading a French novel. There was nothing to do in the Chancellery, and a diplomat should get as much practice as possible in the French.

Incidentally this was a very interesting French novel, for the clerk was obliged to tap two or three times on the door, before making himself heard.

"A telegram, Sir," he said at length, coming into the room.

Laselle reached out his hand without looking up, finished the page, then tore open the enve-

lope and found a dispatch from Washington in cipher. He immediately forgot the French novel, for a dispatch in cipher is apt to be important. Going to the safe, in the corner of the room, he opened it, and slid his hand mechanically into the iron pigeon hole where the code book was usually kept. It was not there. The pigeon hole was deep, so he pushed his arm clear in, still with no result.

The Charge d'Affairs turned pale. The explanation was simple: the book, of course had been put into some other pigeon hole, and yet its absence from the accustomed place gave him an unpleasant shock.

Now Laselle had the making of a real diplomat, reinforced by considerable training. He was quick-witted and possessed great power of control over all outward betrayal of his emotions or thoughts. Calfouglous, the Levantine clerk, stood there, watching him. If he stooped down and looked into the safe and did not pull out the book, the clever and inquisitive Greek would suspect something. He therefore turned around saying:

"Oh, Mr. Calfouglous, go down to the custom house immediately and get a box of supplies which has been lying there for several days for the legation. I'll sign you the order for it now."

Pushing shut the safe door, he sat down at his desk, filled in, signed and sealed the order. Calfouglous took it and went away.

Then the Charge d'Affaires again opened the safe door, and looked carefully into every compartment.

The code book was not there!

He dropped into a chair to think. Had it been mislaid during the confusion of moving? He did not believe so. True, the Minister had been in charge, but the latter, though inexperienced, was a careful man, of exceptional intelligence.

Laselle locked the door of the Chancellery and made a thorough search. Perhaps the minister had come down during the Secretary's absence to decipher a message and put the book in some drawer, though this seemed hardly probable.

The search revealed nothing.

"No," reflected Laselle, "the code book was always put into the safe, into the same place. But who could have got it out of the safe?"

Nobody knew the combination except Mr. Parsons, the Minister, and Laselle himself. In fact, just the day before the former had left, he had changed the clock and made a new combination. Laselle had written the figures down on a piece of paper, which he had put in his pocket-book, as there is danger of forgetting a combination that one is not yet familiar with.

His suspicions immediately fell on Calfouglous. Perhaps the man was a spy in the service of some other government.

Among all the vast and complicated interests of those great commercial firms known as "Governments," having their ramifications and agencies all over the globe, who could say what Power would be interested in gaining the key to the American secret correspondence, or what price it would be willing to pay? Tapping the private wire of a big firm of brokers would be an insignificant stroke in comparison to this.

The Secretary knew of various instances in which codes had been stolen and photographed, or copied: he ran over in his mind the leading enterprises and policies of the United States and tried to decide which Home Office or ministry would be most interested in probing the secret intentions of Uncle Sam, but he soon realized that this train of thought led nowhere.

The one thing certain was, that the book had been lost while he was in charge, and that he would be held responsible. In diplomacy, as in war, a man must not let himself be outwitted or victimized. Results are the only things that count, and excuses and explanations do not have much weight.

If the code book was lost, it had been lost at Athens, while he, Laselle was in charge of it. Very probably at this moment a secret agent was

speeding with a copy of it to some capital of Europe or Asia or South America.

Laselle remained in the Chancellery all day, pacing up and down, thinking.

He consumed so many cigarettes that he became very nervous and felt a pain in the region of the heart.

During the morning some Americans came for emergency passports to Constantinople and he was obliged to go up to the reception room to receive them. Before doing so, he locked the Chancellery door, and put the key in his pocket. If the book had been stolen, the thief would try to return it into the safe without being seen.

The thing began to grow very clear: Athens had been chosen for the reason that comparatively few cipher messages are received at that post. Under ordinary circumstances it would be possible to purloin the book, copy and return it without detection, a program necessary to the success of the scheme, for, in case of detection, the cipher would immediately be changed.

It was evident, too, that the theft had taken place within the last day or two, or the book would already have been brought back.

"I must catch the thief when he puts it back into the safe," mused Laselle.

He stayed about the office all day except when he went out to lunch and then he locked it. No one, he reflected, having a duplicate key, would

risk using it in the day time, for the door was plainly visible from the street, and people were continually passing and there were servants about.

During the afternoon young Schuyler came in, smoked a few cigarettes, and dawdled about the room. He talked a little to Laselle, and the latter endured him as best he could, for Jane's sake.

"That was a jolly good turn you did me with Sis, you know," he said, trying to get on more friendly terms with his unresponsive companion, "I shan't forget that in a hurry, old chap."

"I would if I were you," yawned Laselle, "all except the promise not to gamble any more."

"Oh, I gave my word as a gentleman for that, don't you know—no more cards for little Cornie. Of course, a game of bridge now and then, for a centime the point,—I don't suppose that counts, eh, Wash?"

"No," replied the Secretary, wearily, "I should hardly suppose that was included in the agreement."

"Nevertheless, I must ask Sis about it," said Schuyler, "women, you know, are queer about these things, deuced queer."

Cornelius went away at last, and Laselle closed up the office, remaining in it till night, with the exception of a short time away for dinner.

All that night he kept vigil in a small archive room communicating with the office, sleeping from time to time in a large leathern chair, but so keenly alert, even during sleep, that he could have been awakened by the slightest footfall, or even by the presence of another near him.

No one came, and the book was still missing when he looked again in the morning.

The situation was aggravated by the arrival of two more cipher messages, one from Washington and one from the Embassy in Constantinople.

Laselle was well-nigh desperate. He felt that he must make some reply during the day, but he still entertained a faint hope of finding the book, or of solving the mystery, before doing so. Early in the morning he searched the library on the first floor, looking behind all the books, and pried open the Minister's roller-top desk, by which he gained access to the drawers, all of which opened by means of the same lock. Descending to the Chancellery, he looked again into the safe, to find the book still missing.

He now realized that he was losing his head, and that, moreover, he could not keep this thing up long. He must, for one thing, have sleep. He determined to catch as much as he could during the day, so he sat down in his arm chair and dozed off, his elbows resting on the desk. He took little catnaps thus, tormented by the nightmare of the lost cipher code, and starting up

every few moments to find the reality more terrible than the dream.

So he passed the morning till about ten, when Schuyler came in, very smartly dressed, with a bunch of violets in his buttonhole.

"Hello!" cried Laselle, with unnatural loudness, and for want of something better to say, "isn't this early for you?"

"Well, yes, by Jove, so it is!" replied Schuyler, "but you know, by Jove, old chap, since I quit the cards, thanks to you and Sis, I go to bed early, and wake up early. Early to bed, you know, and early to rise—great business, eh, old fellow? I tell you I find it so! By the way, old chap, the English Minister is up stairs, and wants to see you. At any rate, he was standing at the front door, ringing the bell as I passed by."

There was only one thought in Laselle's mind. Perhaps the English Minister knew something of the missing code book, and had come to do a friendly act. It is one part of diplomacy to make friends on the principle that if I help you now, perhaps some time you will help me.

"Keep shop till I get back, will you, Cornie?" said Laselle. "I'm expecting some one. If he comes, tell him I will be here in a minute."

Sir James Winter stayed but a moment. He had dropped in merely to enquire if any news had been heard from Mr. Parsons, who had not been feeling well when he left.

"Not a soul called," announced Schuyler, cheerfully, "Well, old chap, I'm off. I've promised to play a game of lawn tennis this morning—foursomes—one of the Princesses in it, so must be punctual, awful bore, tennis. Ta! Ta!"

The Secretary remained until one, getting what sleep he could in his chair, but ever on the watch. Not another soul came in. Before going out to lunch he opened the safe again, more out of habit now than anything else, and dropping upon his knees, looked in.

Then he rose to his feet, staggered to a chair, and dropped into it, his face as white as that of a corpse.

"My God!" he sobbed, "my God! Poor Jane! Poor Jane!"

He was holding the code book in his hands.

## CHAPTER XXII

### *Mr. Parsons Performs an Unpleasant Duty*

LASELLE'S first impulse was to have a private talk with Schuyler and find out the reason, if possible, of his having taken the code book. On further thought, however, the thing looked so ugly to him, that he found it impossible to decide upon this course. If he took the matter up officially, and thus divulged his knowledge of the young man's guilt, he should be obliged to report the case to Washington, and very likely be the chief instrument in convicting Jane's brother of having betrayed his country.

This was no doubt his duty, but to act up to the mark required more strength than he possessed. In fact, the Secretary concluded to temporize. Perhaps, he thought, the Department will discover the leak before any harm is done, without knowing where it occurred. He concluded to wait a few days at least, for developments. They came a month later when Mr. Parsons arrived home from Egypt, before the termination of his leave of absence. He sent for the Secretary immediately, to come to his private office.

The Honorable Franklin Parsons was a man about forty years of age, clean shaven, round

and ruddy of face. He was editor and proprietor of his own small but influential daily in Rhode Island, and belonged to the younger school of American journalists, whose great apostle is Theodore Roosevelt. He was a graduate of Harvard, widely read on many topics, a trenchant writer, a forceful speaker, a keen and ardent politician of the sort who believe that it is destructive in a democracy to leave the manipulation of politics to rogues and grafters. If politics is dirty, say these men, it is the duty of good citizens to get to work and clean it up. Mr. Parsons had now been a diplomat but about six months, but he had absorbed all the chief features of the business and most of the details in the first six weeks, thanks to his newspaper training, and at the end of that brief period would have been able to write a series of articles or a book if need be, on "Diplomacy as I have known it."

There was not a grey hair in his brown head, and his keen, good-humored eyes looked through spectacles, made necessary by much study in College and the writing of many editorials by electric light.

For the rest, he was quick-witted, possessed a keen sense of humor, and patronized a first-class New York tailor.

"Take a seat, Mr. Laselle," he said, "or first, please, close that door, won't you? Thank you,

I don't care to have anybody overhear our conversation." He came straight to the point, as was his wont. "I have returned here from Egypt, by order of the Department. It seems the cipher code has been stolen—or perhaps that is too strong a word. Let us say, appropriated. And that certain plans for the investment of colossal sums of American capital in the far East have leaked out. It is needless to say that the parties most interested in obtaining this information, and who would be most willing to pay for it, if necessary, are the very parties who seem to be in possession of it."

Laselle needed all of his training, all of his natural sang froid to carry him through now. It occurred to him that the show of a little excitement would be expected under the circumstances, but he had too much self-respect to play-act.

He had resolved upon his course and, having had time to think the matter out clearly, no fear of consequences could make him alter his decision.

He realized that Mr. Parsons was regarding him keenly, so he raised his head and looked him squarely in the eyes. Mr. Parsons heaved a sigh of relief. This was not the glance of a guilty man.

"Do you know anything about this, Laselle?" he asked kindly.

"Before I answer you, Sir," replied the Secretary, "may I ask why you—you suppose that I should know anything about it?"

"Certainly. You were in charge here when the leak occurred, and the unaccountable delay in replying to certain messages in cipher to this office, just at that time, points suspicion here. Why did you not answer those messages immediately on receiving them? Were you absent from your post?"

"I was not."

Laselle rose, walked over to the mantel, took a cigarette from a silver box and lighted it, carefully blowing out the match, which he snapped into the hearth with his thumb.

"I think it would be for the best interests of the service," he said at last, "if I were to explain that the code probably was filched at this post." He spoke very calmly, and in his usual hesitating drawl, as though he were attempting to make careful selection of his words, and he showed no symptoms of nervousness, or excitement. His face, however, as the Minister noticed, was quite pale.

"The book disappeared for several days, for how long, I do not know, as I only discovered that it was gone when I had need of it. Later it was, ah, returned again."

"It was taken from the safe?"

"It was taken from the safe."

"And returned back to the safe?"

"And returned back to the safe."

"But you alone knew the combination, Mr. Laselle," observed the Minister. "Whom do you suspect?"

"No one," replied Laselle, "absolutely no one," which was quite true.

The Minister remained for some moments immersed in thought.

"The safe is a cheap affair," he said musingly. "If an expert were in the room several hours alone with it, he probably could open it without the combination. That could hardly have been done without collusion with one of the servants, or—or somebody in the house. But let me see, you alone had possession of the key to the office, is it not so?"

"Yes, sir."

"Very well, then," said Mr. Parsons, sadly. "I shall be obliged to report to the Department on these lines: that when you wished to reply to a despatch from the Department, in cipher, you discovered that the book was missing from the safe; but that several days afterward it was found again in its place, and then you replied— On the whole, Laselle, this is a rather unsatisfactory explanation, does it not so strike you?"

"It seems to have that appearance, Sir."

"You have nothing further to offer?"

"Nothing at the present moment, Sir."

"I hoped that you would have at least some theory, some explanation. You see, the Department will probably censure you strongly for not reporting immediately the disappearance of the code. What have you to say to that?"

To even this point Laselle could not reply. He had thought it right to make sure that the code book really was missing before reporting so serious a matter, and the search had consumed something over a day, and then had come the discovery of Schuyler's guilt.

"I suppose," he replied looking over the Minister's head, at the corner of the ceiling beyond, "that my failure in this particular must be set down to—ah, weakness?"

"It is a failing of which I have never suspected you, Mr. Laselle," replied the Minister. "In fact, the discovery of such a trait in your character comes as a distinct revelation to me. I have been instructed by the Department, in case you were not able to offer a satisfactory explanation of this matter, to suspend you from the service pending a thorough investigation. You leave no resource open to me except to perform this painful duty, and it is painful, I assure you. If there is anything you have left unsaid, if there is anything you can do to assist in unravelling this mystery, or helping to point out the traitor in our own camp, I

advise, I urge you, for the sake of your career and your good name, to speak up."

"I have nothing further to say."

"Then," said the Minister, "you may consider yourself suspended from the service until further notice."

Laselle bowed and left the room.

In the Chancellery below, where he went to get his hat, and some private papers in his desk, he found young Schuyler writing a letter upon fancy stationery. The latter dabbed his monocle into his eye as the Secretary entered, and exclaimed, as it dropped out again:

"Hello, old chap, deuced glad to see you, don't you know! The Princess Alice commands us both to be at the Tennis this afternoon. I'm Her Highness' messenger. Deuced bore, tennis, eh?"

Laselle made no reply. He took a few papers and letters out of his desk, and picked up his hat and gloves.

"Oh, Schuyler!" he said.

"Yes, old chap."

Laselle approached the desk of the young man and spoke to him in a low, quiet tone.

"I am quitting the diplomatic service. I have been suspended by the Department for carelessness in connection with the cipher code!"

"Eh, what?" said Schuyler, suddenly sitting up, and forgetting his monocle.

"Yes. It was extracted from the safe while in my custody. I am accused of gross carelessness, and rightfully. I shall even be suspected, very probably, of graver guilt."

"Have you any idea as to who the guilty party is?" asked Schuyler.

"I do not care to talk of that. I merely want to say that I am leaving Athens, for good. Your sister has often asked me to look after you, use my influence over you, that is, to induce you, if possible, to leave off your low habits and become a man. It is the great fear of her life that you will do something to disgrace herself and you, and the memory of your worthy parents. It is probable, that, after this, she will not have much confidence in me as a guide and instructor of youth. It seems to me, however, that my words should have a certain weight with you, under the circumstances. All I ask of you now, is to think things over, to brace up, leave gambling and drink and fast women, and general good-for-nothingness behind, and be a man. Try to realize exactly what sort of person you are, in fact, to see yourself as others see you, and to become different. You will, I think, if you reflect a little admit to yourself that I have a certain right to demand this of you."

Schuyler sprang to his feet, his face crimson with rage.

"There can't any damn man talk to me that way!" he cried. "I'll have you know I'm a gentleman and a Schuyler!"

"I'm quite aware that you are a Schuyler," drawled Laselle, "and I'm trying to persuade you to be a gentleman. If you don't, now, make a serious attempt in that direction, you will prove yourself a worse cad, a more degenerate and hopeless yellow dog than I believe it possible for any human being to prove himself."

Laselle was quite calm, but there was something in his eyes as he stood close to the young man and looked him straight in the pupils, that caused all the bluster to ooze out of Schuyler's finger tips.

"I don't know how I could express myself more plainly," said Laselle, as he turned to leave.

## CHAPTER XXIII

### *The Professor in His Element*

PRISCILLA had seen Jane coming from a distance and ran down the road to meet her. The exercise, in the soft, yet exhilarating air of the Attic December, had deepened the roses in her plump cheeks, and the strong sea breezes were blowing athwart her brow a strand of brown hair, loosened from the Grecian fillet. Her white himation streamed behind her and snapped in the wind. She was accompanied by Edhem, who, not satisfied with the speed that she was making, circled around her, barking furiously, until the two women were nearly together, when he took several turns about them both, his body curved in a half moon, the hollow toward them. At last he stopped suddenly in front of Jane, flat on his belly, paws extended, and looked her in the eye. She returned the gaze solemnly and he remained as quiet as a stone dog on a lawn; but detecting finally a faint smile creep into her eyes, he bounded suddenly upon her in canine joy, nearly knocking her from her feet in his attempt to reach her face with his dusty muzzle.

"Oh, Jane," cried Priscilla, breathlessly, as soon as Edhem had become quiet enough to

allow of conversation, "there have been the most wonderful discoveries since you were here last! I can't see how you can absent yourself from the place so long. Why, it is nearly two weeks since you were here, during which we have been laying bare the very soul of the ancient world as it were!"

"The excavations are coming on well, then?" asked Jane. "You are really finding things?"

"Finding things? But you must let the Professor himself show them to you, and explain them. I do hope he's at the museum!"

"Museum?" repeated Jane, wonderingly. "How can I see him if he's at the museum? I walked out. I've been dissipating too much lately and I needed the exercise. But I want to see the excavations, and I wouldn't have time to do that and get back to the Museum."

"Not the museum in town, Jane! Our museum. The Professor has fitted up a room in the house where he arranges and classifies and labels the finds from the tomb, and this he calls 'the museum'. There he is now!"

It was indeed Professor Goodwin Harkins in his shirt-sleeves, and a soft, red flannel shirt at that. He wore boots, and one trouser-leg—the left—was tucked in the corresponding boot top. The right had been pulled out and fallen about his foot in a recent attempt to burrow into the mouth of a dark tunnel. His

face was burned even redder than his hair by the sun and wind. His pointed gray beard was powdered with dust. He carried a basket on his left arm, and he walked with the eager, high step of the enthusiast.

"Good morning, Miss Vandervoert," he said, lifting his soft slouch hat. "I date our tomb about the 18th century B. C., or possibly it may be earlier. It should, I think, be technically described as Late Minoan. The designs upon the pottery fragments that we have found, so familiar to all students of the late Minoan age, suggest this. The inscription upon this little cup, however, in characters identical with the Cretan inscriptions, now leaves no doubt in my mind."

"Have you found a cup?" asked Jane.

"The gem of the collection," replied the Professor, "but come into the museum and you both shall see it."

They turned into the court of the peasant's cottage and proceeded directly to a small granary consisting of two rooms, now occupied by Professor Harkins. One of these was open and in it clothing, trunks, satchels, books, scientific instruments, were tumbled about in hopeless confusion. Jane noticed with much amusement that a hen was drinking out of the water pitcher, and that a large red rooster was perching on the foot of the bed. These intrud-

ers flew noisily out of the window, without seeming to have even attracted the Professor's attention, who took an enormous key from his pocket, and unloosened a formidable looking padlock, by means of which the adjoining room was secured.

"Wait one moment, young ladies," he commanded, "till I throw some light on the scene. You might knock over something."

Tiptoeing into the dark room, he threw open the wooden shutters that served as a window, and Jane entered the museum which had cost her, up to the present moment, something over $3,000; for the reader is no doubt aware that she was the Professor's mysterious Angel.

"There, young ladies!" he said, setting the basket down on a rough wooden table near the window, "you are now in the St. Ascension Museum, for so I believe this locality is called."

He rubbed his hands together contentedly, and looked about him. Following his eyes with her own, Jane saw four bare stone walls and a roof without ceiling, from the rafters of which were hanging a dozen or more yellow melons in bags of netting, besides strings of garlic, dried figs, and small dried fish, tied by the tails.

On three or four rough deal tables and on plank shelves attached to the walls by means of long spikes, were the "finds" from the excavations.

Jane strolled about the room with Priscilla and looked at them. She was distinctly disappointed, despite her friends' running stream of enthusiastic comment. What she saw were tiny fragments of dirt-encrusted pottery, in piles: a few rusty dagger blades, with big handles, the headless body of a female figure, in an astonishingly modern skirt, with uncovered bosom disproportionately large, a pile of round disks, all bearing a peculiar spiral device, and suggesting poker chips.

Jane was about to ask, irreverently, if they played poker in the late Minoan age, but fortunately the Professor prevented her by beginning to talk, and, as he talked, Jane caught his enthusiasm. He picked up one by one the small fragments of pottery to illustrate his remarks, and to him every detail connected with them was eloquent of the long dead past; the material, the color of the background, the pigment of the design, one little line, or part of a line from an intricate tracing, suggested to his trained imagination the entire object, the date at which it was made, the manner of men who made it, their life and times, their very thought and religion.

"And now," said Professor Harkins, at last, "I must show you the gem, as I consider it, of the entire collection."

Turning to the basket, he lifted from it a

dainty shallow cup, in the shape of a heart, with the handle spanning the blunt end. It was whitish in color, and as he held it up to the light, one could see that it was partially transparent.

"This cup," said Professor Harkins, "is of alabaster, and its material is another proof of my theory that we have to deal with a Minoan tomb. But look here!"

Blowing the dust from the cup, he pointed with his fountain pen to a line of characters, traced with much delicacy and symmetry, and running entirely around the rim.

"Why, it's writing!" cried Jane. "Now, when you have read it you will know, perhaps, who is buried in the tomb, and—and—many things."

"Could I only read that writing," sighed the Professor, "I should indeed know many things."

"Do you mean to say that you can't read it?" asked Priscilla. "Well, if you can't read it, who on earth can?"

"The ghost of King Minos, if we could exorcise him from his tomb, or perhaps Achilles, or even Theseus. That perfect and beautiful alphabet was in existence long before the Homeric poems were first put in writing, and how long ago that was first done to the minstrel songs that were afterwards gathered

together into the 'Illiad,' nobody knows. We keep going farther and farther back. Perhaps, who knows?" and he smiled faintly, "Adam wrote. There are numerous long inscriptions in this same alphabet, and more are coming to light every day. Some of our best scholars, Evans, of Crete, for instance, are in danger of losing their minds in their despair at not being able to read it. All that I can tell you is, that here," and he pointed to them with his fountain pen, "are five characters which are found elsewhere in the same order and are probably the name of a god. The man who can decipher that writing will find the key to the history of a great and splendid civilization, a mighty and powerful and wonderful empire, whose only historian, up to the present date, is the so-called Greek poet Homer, who performed for the heroes of that early age, mythical even to him, something the same service that Tennyson performed for King Arthur and the Knights of the Round Table."

"Will it ever be read?" asked Jane quietly, her eyes blazing.

"Sometime, sometime. We shall find a bilingual inscription, like the Rosetti Stone," and the Professor pursed his lips, "in Egyptian Hieroglyph and Minoan, possibly, or—or—perhaps Hitite. Given the smallest clue, and the rest would be comparatively easy. But perhaps

you would like to walk over to the excavations? I must not be gone long. I came away because I wanted to lock up this beautiful cup."

As they were strolling across the fields that even here sloped sightly toward the giant mass of Hymettus, and that were a vivid green now from the winter rains, save where here and there lay square ploughed patches, red and resembling squares of a giant checker-board, Jane asked, anxiously:

"Do not the roosters disturb your rest there at the farm house, Professor? I saw one perching on the foot of the bed as we went through your room."

In this new light thrown upon Dr. Harkins' activities, to whom every moment was precious in the search for knowledge, even the roosters had suddenly lost their comical side.

"Bless you, no!" he exclaimed, "I am so absorbed with this work that I don't even hear them."

"He don't sleep," puffed Priscilla, for the Professor, with his chest thrown bravely out and his arms crooked at the elbows, was setting a pace across the plain that taxed even Jane's long, athletic legs to the utmost. "He works all night, I do believe. I went out several times with a fishpole to poke the roosters and make them keep still but it made them worse. The

hens all cackled, and Edhem set up a fearful howling, while the roosters only flew higher and crowed the louder in defiance. It was of no use, anyway, for there was always a light in the Professor's room, and I could see him sitting there at the table studying the vase fragments."

"Many of them are nearly complete," he explained, "I hope in a week or two to glue several of them together, and set them up nearly as good as new."

They soon arrived at the excavations, which were being conducted at a large mound, into the side of which a long passage way had been cleared out, shallow at first but that grew deeper and deeper until at last it terminated in a wide opening in the side of the little hill. The Professor called this passage a "dromos." Jane noticed, as she entered it, that it was faced on either side with large, rectangular stones hewn and laid with great precision. Greek peasants were coming out, having on their shoulders baskets filled with earth, and others were going in, their baskets empty.

The entrance to the tomb consisted of three enormous monoliths, the one across the top so heavy and massive that it would have puzzled even modern engineers, with modern machines to have brought and set it there.

The interior consisted of a vaulted chamber

in the exact shape of an ancient beehive, constructed of stones hewn in straight lines and laid in courses which the Professor described as "ashlar."

"This was doubtless the family vault of a royal line," he explained, "and was rifled in prehistoric times, which accounts for the absence of gold ornaments, and objects of value. Excuse me a moment, I must talk to the men."

"I will show her the chamber of the Princess," volunteered Priscilla.

## CHAPTER XXIV

### *A Mysterious Subterranean Tunnel*

TAKING Jane by the arm, she led her into a square apartment, cut into solid rock. It was quite dark in here, and Priscilla lit a candle. On a niche in the rock was a sarcophagus, open. In the bottom lay a skeleton, all the bones in position, as they had lain for the thousands of years, since the body had originally been put there for its eternal sleep.

"Jane," whispered Priscilla, "this is the skeleton of a princess. I have spent hours, I verily believe, looking upon it, and as I have gazed, a queer feeling has come over me, a—a sort of conviction."

"You believe you are the reincarnation of that Princess?"

"Don't laugh, dear Jane—here."

"No," replied Jane, "not even you could make me laugh here, funny old Pris! But I won't promise not to laugh afterwards."

In the main chamber they found Professor Hawkins, of the Ancient Archaeological Institute at Athens, who was discussing with Dr. Harkins the advisability of clearing out a round tunnel that opened into the tomb. Progress had been made to the distance of about 40 feet,

and the tunnel seemed interminable. Both of the learned men were mystified, as this was the first time that such a feature of a beehive tomb had been met with.

Dr. Harkins was saying that the thing was extremely interesting for this reason, but that he hesitated, as his funds were running low; and Dr. Hawkins was regretting that the cutting off of the Carnegie grant prevented the Institute from contributing the required amount.

Jane secretly resolved that the money should be provided. She had been bitten by the archaeological mosquito and the fever was now working in her veins.

She walked back as far as the museum with Dr. Hawkins, a little clean shaven man, with closely cropped hair, whose features faintly suggested those of Napoleon Bonaparte.

He was all eagerness to spend an hour or so with the alabaster vase.

"Are you coming, Pris?" asked Jane, before starting.

"No," replied her friend, "I always stay till the end and walk home with the Professor. You don't know how exciting it is! At any moment some wonderful discovery may be made. Besides, before going, I must spend a few moments alone with the bones of the Princess. Jane, her name was Ianthe. I know, for

I hear that beautiful word repeating itself over and over in my mind, even in my dreams. It is the same as our 'Violet.' I was called Ianthe, once, in the long, long ago."

"Very well, then, I will leave you with Ianthe and the Professor, but if this keeps on much longer, I shall feel it my solemn duty to write to Abner—about the Professor, I mean."

"How absurd of you, Jane! You would not even say it in fun, if you knew the dear Professor as well as I do. He is so absorbed in his work that he has no more sentiment than a graven image. I am a help to him, though, and the work is so interesting. You ought to wait till quitting time and see me distribute the prizes."

"The prizes?"

"Yes. The Professor used to give each man who found a particularly nice vase fragment or —or anything, a cigarette. I did not think it right that a man of his commanding influence should publicly encourage cigarette smoking— and some of them mere boys, too, so the idea occurred to me to bake some doughnuts and bring out. The men call them 'sosivakia,' little life preservers, and every time one finds anything he holds it up and cries, 'Is it worth a sosivaki, effendi'?"

Sure enough, at this moment Professor Harkins appeared, rubbing his hands and saying in a business-like tone:

"A doughnut, Miss Bates! We have a particularly fine fragment."

Priscilla bustled away.

Jane was much surprised and disappointed to find that Mr. Hawkins did not refer to the subject of Archaeology at all during the walk back to the shepherd's cottage. His reputation for learning was great, and she knew that he had written works which had contributed no little to his fame. She was burning to hear his idea of the underground passage, and of Mycenaean writing, but instead, he indulged in small talk with evident relish, regaling her with the latest society news and with bits of gossip concerning court and diplomatic circles. He was evidently one of the happy mortals who are able to put their work on and off as though it were a mason's apron or a sculptor's jacket.

"You have heard the news about our friend, Laselle?" he asked, as they were nearing the house.

"No," replied Jane, "is he leaving Athens? Has he been promoted?"

"He has left Athens, but I fear it is not a case of promotion. There are very ugly rumors afloat. It seems there was some sort of a diplomatic scandal, and Laselle was forced to resign. I hoped you knew something about it, as you are, I had formed the idea, an old friend of his, and I find it hard to believe anything wrong of him."

"I do know something about it!" cried Jane, much troubled. "I have heard nothing of this 'scandal,' as you call it, but I know Washington Laselle well enough to be absolutely sure that he could do no act that was not prompted by the highest and loftiest motives!"

"That is exactly my own impression," said Professor Hawkins, "and I am glad to hear you confirm it. But here we are at the house. If you are not going for an hour or so, I shall be glad to accompany you back to the city."

"Thank you!" replied Jane, "I must be going immediately. Good afternoon, Professor."

"Good afternoon," and the Professor turned toward the house, thinking of the alabaster vase. He had put on his archaeological mental jacket again, and had forgotten her on the instant.

He was not destined to remain oblivious of her existence for long, however, as Spiro came riding in from town on his little donkey, and on seeing her, dismounted and began talking excitedly. Occasionally he bleated like a lamb.

Much mystified, she called Professor Hawkins away from the alabaster vase.

"I am so sorry to disturb you," she explained, "but would you be so kind as to tell me what Spiro wants? He evidently has something of importance to communicate."

"It is quite important," said the Professor,

after hearing Spiro's story. "He says that he has been raising a young lamb specially for you, a beautiful young lamb, and that you will find it in the garden of the Spiti Merlin. It has one black ear, and he has named it Maria, after the Virgin Mary. It bleats all night, like a nightingale."

"What under the heavens will I do with it?" asked Jane in despair.

"You can't refuse it," said Professor Hawkins, who enjoyed a sly joke. "His feelings would be terribly hurt."

"Oh, well, tell him I thank him a thousand times. That it has been the one dream of my life to possess a young lamb. Thank you, once more Professor, and now good afternoon, I am really going this time."

She started down the road at a rapid, swinging stride, her mind full of Laselle, the kindly, whimsical, domineering friend of her young girlhood. Her idea was to go straight to the American Minister, and demand the particulars of him.

The thought occurred to her that perhaps with her great wealth, her family connections or somehow, if she only knew what the trouble was, she might be of assistance.

Seeing that she intended to walk, Spiro promptly tied his donkey to a small tree and came with her.

Jane ordered him to go back once or twice, but he paid no heed, and she went silently ahead, occupied with her own thoughts.

## CHAPTER XXV

*Miss Schuyler Has a Distressing Adventure*

DURING the first half of that walk home Spiro was a decided bore. He trotted along at her side and talked continually in Greek, scarcely a word of which did she understand. Occasionally he made a little excursion to right or left to pluck a tiny waxen flower, sweet-smelling and not unlike a miniature lily for her. She accepted these, of course, as there seemed no reason to refuse them, though she felt slightly embarrassed in doing so. It had begun to dawn upon her that Spiro's attentions, ridiculous and impossible as they were, might become annoying. These bucolic gifts of his must be stopped. She would have somebody talk to him, she resolved, and she would send the lamb back. The fact that he resembled the Hermes of Praxiteles (and here she glanced at him slyly and admitted that Priscilla was right) was no reason why he should send her lambs and bags of fresh cheese. She determined to hail the first passing carriage, as soon as she arrived in the outskirts of town, and drive straight to the legation, leaving Spiro standing in the middle of the road.

As these thoughts were passing through her mind, she was startled by a fierce snarling and growling behind her.

Whirling suddenly about, she saw a sight that caused her to scream with fear. Edhem Pasha, who had silently followed them, was rolling over and over in the road, doing battle to the death with another dog, fully twice his size.

"Holy Virgin!" muttered Spiro, and he advanced toward the two animals, tightly clutching his heavy shepherd's crook. Swinging it about his head, he struck the large dog several blows, evidently in the hope of killing or disabling him. Their only effect, however, was to cause the fierce brute to let go of Edhem Pasha, and retreat a few paces, beyond the reach of Spiro's crook.

Jane now gazed upon a fearful sight, and one that caused her heart to stand still. The whole of Greece, as we have seen, outside the limits of the large cities, is infested with fierce dogs. The most of these are of the rough shepherd breed, animals of remarkable intelligence, that bite, indeed, if one ventures too near the flocks that they are guarding, but that are not seriously dangerous.

But there are a few dogs left in Greece, of another breed, that it is not good for an unarmed man to meet. These are smooth-skinned,

rangy, lean animals, as large as Great Danes, with heavy heads, and wide, strong jaws. They are, perhaps, the genuine Molossi. The ordinary shepherd dog, if you throw stones at him, runs or dodges. These animals show absolutely no fear, and, if you make the least hostile demonstration, come straight at you. Men have, on various occasions, been torn in pieces by them.

On such an animal was Jane now looking. His eyes were red, and blood and white froth were dripping from his mouth.

Her first impulse, and a very natural one, was to turn and run, but she had sense enough to realize that such a proceeding would attract the animal's attention to herself and that he would dash past Spiro, who was now her only hope, and seize her.

In fact, the young shepherd, who stood perfectly still with his eyes fixed upon the great hound, was saying something to her in a low tone and she believed he was commanding her to stand still.

Poor Edhem, who was vainly attempting to arise, was evidently done for. As a matter of fact, his back bone was broken.

Spiro soon decided upon his course of action. Still keeping his eyes fixed upon those of the animal he passed his crook from the right hand to the left hand, and drew a long knife from his wide leathern belt.

Jane expected to see him rush upon the dog, but instead of this, he assumed a crouching, vigilant attitude and backed slowly toward her.

As he did so, the huge beast came on; not with a rush and a growl, but in absolute silence, and at a walk.

Jane remembered that she had frequently been told by Laselle, in cautioning her against walking beyond the city limits, that hydrophobia is more prevalent in Greece than in any other country, and she saw, to her horror, that this animal was in the first stages of madness.

When Spiro reached her, he stooped still lower, with knife upraised, his left arm across his throat.

Jane never could understand where she found the courage to stand still, to refrain from screaming. Straight on the great beast came, nearer and nearer, the white foam dripping from his mouth. Closer and closer he came, till at last with a low growl he sprang at the young shepherd's throat, and then Spiro had both his strong arms around him and was plunging the knife into his side, while the two were rolling upon the ground together.

She was but a woman, after all, though a brave one, and she was now seized with panic. When she next came to her senses, she found herself far down the road, her skirts raised

high above her knees, running as she had never run before. In her ears was that fearful snarling which the dog had made when Spiro bore him to the ground, and a wild fear possessed her that she should soon feel a pair of great paws on her shoulders, a hot breath on her cheek.

She was recalled to her senses by Spiro's voice calling her loudly. Turning, she saw the shepherd running toward her, laughing, waving the bloody knife in his hand. He pointed triumphantly at the Molossos, that was lying dead in the middle of the road.

Jane seized his left hand and shook it, laughing too, hysterically. The thing that caused her to forget her fear and recover her wits more quickly than anything else, was the sight of Edhem Pasha, who was trying to drag his poor mutilated body towards her through the dust. Going back to him, she stooped and patted him on the head, and Edhem Pasha, dying, looked into her eyes with eyes that were more than human. Jane confidently expects to meet that dog in heaven.

Then Spiro leaned over and, stroking Edhem's head with his left hand, thrust his knife into his heart. When he looked up at Jane, great tears were running down his cheeks.

"But you were bitten!" she cried, noticing now for the first time that his cheek was scarred

by the sharp fangs that had tried to get at his throat. Seizing him by both wrists, she looked him over, and saw that his clothes had been torn in several places, and were dyed with blood, his own blood, about his legs and waist.

"You were bitten, Spiro, terribly bitten! Come, come if you can! We must find a doctor immediately, for the dog was mad. My God, I am sure he was mad!"

Seizing him by the wrist, she started for the town as fast as she could go, and the shepherd, though he did not understand a word, trotted contentedly along with her. Contrary to his usual custom, he neither chatted to her nor sang. Once she heard him sob, and, looking up at him, saw that his face was convulsed with grief.

"Poor Edhem Pasha! Poor Edham Pasha!" he muttered in Greek, and she knew that he was suffering, not for himself, but for the faithful animal who had been to the simple shepherd a friend, and often a companion.

She knew now why he had backed toward her and had thrown his arms around that terrible dog. He might possibly have kept him off from himself by means of his heavy crook, but by throwing his arms around him, he had adopted the only course by which he could make sure of her safety. His act seemed to Jane the most beautiful thing she had ever

heard of; for Spiro must have seen at a glance that the dog was mad.

Fortune favored them. The town was not far, and they had scarcely entered the outskirts ere they discovered a cab standing in front of a little café.

Jane fairly pushed Spiro in and climbed after him.

"Spiti Merlin!" commanded Spiro.

"No! no!" cried Jane. She did not know the Greek word for "doctor," but fortunately the name of the large hospital where Prince Georgevitch had recovered of his severe shaking up in the well occurred to her, and that was not far away.

"Evangelismos!" she cried, "Grigora!"

"Grigora" is modern Greek for "quick" or "hurry," and one cannot live long in Greece without being compelled to learn that word.

The driver whipped up his horses, and they soon reached the front gate of the shady yard in which the long rambling building stands.

Spiro, in the meantime had fainted away.

Jane opened herself the door of the closed carriage and ran up the steps and into the hall. A young interne, in shirt sleeves, and wearing a long white apron, came out of one of the rooms to see what she wanted.

He spoke French.

"A young peasant," she explained, "has been terribly bitten by a mad dog. He is badly injured, I think. He has fainted away and he may even be dead. I have brought him here in a carriage. He must have the best treatment in the city and I will pay whatever it costs."

"If he has been bitten by a dog, he must go to the Pasteur Institute, Madame," said the doctor, exasperatingly calm and business-like, after the manner of his kind.

"But it would take a week to get him to Paris, and then it might be too late. He must have help now. Are there no doctors here, the best in town, who could treat him? I don't care what it costs!"

"Oh, not Paris, Madame. The Athens Pasteur Institute, one of the best in Europe."

And thus Jane learned another lesson regarding this strange people of so many contradictory attributes, whose dogs are waiting to tear you limb from limb just outside the city limits, and whose educational, charitable and scientific institutions are among the best in the world.

An older doctor was called, and Spiro's injuries were hastily examined in the carriage.

It was found that his left leg was badly torn, and that he had fainted from pain and loss of blood.

He was taken into the Evangelismos, that his wounds might be dressed.

"He shall be driven over to the Pasteur Institute within half an hour," explained the older doctor, "and now, Madame, if we could find that dog, if you could tell us to whom he belongs, you would be helping matters along wonderfully. We could examine him scientifically, and see whether he really was mad or not."

"He has been killed," explained Jane. "The shepherd killed him while defending me."

"Then perhaps you can tell where his carcass is, so that we can send a man for it."

"No, but I know where it is. Send the man, quick and I will take a carriage and go with him."

"I will come with you, then," said the doctor, taking a sudden resolution.

It was long after nightfall when Miss Jane Vandervoert Schuyler, of Philadelphia, drove back through the streets of Athens, lined with spicy pepper trees, in a closed carriage, with a middle-aged doctor, who was inclined to be facetious, beside her, and the carcass of a huge Molossian hound lying limp across the driver's feet.

She was very tired, and faint with hunger, and she wondered what Washington Laselle would say to her, could he have the opportunity of expressing his opinion about this most recent adventure of hers.

## CHAPTER XXVI

*Under the Shadow of Guilt*

JANE saw the American Minister the next day and asked him about Laselle. The Honorable Mr. Parsons was instinctively enough of a diplomat to be frank and seemingly communicative, without revealing anything that should be kept secret. He knew what things could be divulged, that is, and told them without the least hesitation, thereby seeming to tell everything.

"The code-book disappeared for several days," he explained, "and the Department had reason to believe that it fell into the hands of another foreign office, that has vast interests, identical with ours. Happily, the matter was found out, immediately, and so no harm was done. We have simply ceased using that code."

"And in what does Mr. Laselle's responsibility consist?" faltered Jane.

"He was in charge at the time, and the book was in his care. I find it very hard to believe him guilty, knowing him as I do. Yet, he has made absolutely no defence, and has, as it were, run away. The thing is, to say the least, very mysterious. Had he stayed right here and faced the music, like a man, I should not have lost faith in him."

"What would have been his object in giving up the book? What could he have gained by it?"

"His object, unless it were gain, is hard to understand. If he needed money, one can imagine circumstances under which the secret code of a government could be sold for a great deal, say for instance, $50,000 or $100,000 or even more."

"Mr. Laselle is an old friend of mine," said Jane, so low as scarcely to be audible. "We played as children together, and his father and mine were intimate. If it were a case of money to be restored, or—or anything of that kind, the required sum might be found."

"The case presents no such feature as that," replied Mr. Parsons, "but I would not feel too great concern as to Mr. Laselle's fate. I do not suppose anything very serious will happen to him. The Department usually avoids scandals and notoriety involving its officials, and is not likely to prosecute. Besides, Mr. Laselle has resigned and his career is ruined. He has been severely punished, you see, already."

Having received this comforting information Jane said "Good morning," and left the Legation.

A conversation with her brother later in the evening was even less satisfactory.

She had thought of sending for him, but

somewhat to her surprise he came in to see her about three o'clock, very sprucely dressed, it is true, and with a white rose in his buttonhole, but much subdued in manner.

He asked for a cup of tea and introduced the subject of Laselle himself.

"Have you heard about the rum go over at the Legation?" he asked.

"Something," replied Jane. "Do you know the real facts in the case?"

"Why, yes. I would know, naturally. But I musn't talk. Diplomatic secrets, you know, Sis, old Girl."

"But you can tell me, Washington and I are such old friends, I am very anxious to hear."

"Oh, naturally, I understand that, you know. Glad to see that you don't take it more seriously to heart. Was awfully afraid, Sis, that you cared for the fellow. That would have been a jolly mess, wouldn't it? I came right over, for I am your only brother, though you are sometimes a little rough on a fellow. Yes, Jane, really you are, by Gad, you know."

"No more than is for your good, Wash—Cornie, I mean. And you have been so much more prudent lately that I have begun to feel quite encouraged."

"Oh, have you really? Well, that's white of you to say so. But about Laselle. I suppose I might as well tell you, on condition that you

don't breathe a word to anybody. Why, it seems that the code book was given away, or sold, while he was in charge. He was the only fellow who had the combination to the safe. There's no doubt about his guilt. In fact, he's run away, which is equivalent to a confession. I feel sorry for the fellow, don't you know, in a way. I like him personally—aw—you couldn't help liking the fellow, don't you know, and he did me a good turn with you, you remember. A woman can't understand these things, Jane, she really can't. It takes a man to help a man in a case like that."

"Washington Laselle a traitor and a sordid traitor at that? Never!"

Yet why had he run away? Why had he not denied his guilt, indignantly?

But Fate, that weaves together in the tapestries of our lives the most diverse and incongruous materials, did not allow her to expend all her anxious thoughts on Washington Laselle, Secretary of the American Legation.

The doctors of the Pasteur Institute found that the terrible beast which had bitten Spiro, the Hymettus' shepherd, had been actually mad.

Jane drove out to the hospital every day. She had a confidential talk with the doctor and convinced him that no sum, however large, need be spared for securing the greatest skill or adopting the most extraordinary measures for saving the young shepherd's life.

All proved unavailing, however. Something might have been done could a certain serum have been obtained from Paris in time, but the virus hydrophobia will not wait. In three days poor Spiro was beyond human aid, and in a week he died in horrible agony.

This dreadful happening drove all other thoughts out of Jane's distracted mind for the time being, and in fact, added a permanent sorrow to her life.

They buried Spiro out on the slopes of Hymettus, where the sheep drift like white clouds over the purple mountain side and the bees hum all the yellow afternoon in the fragrant fields of thyme.

Jane rode out to the grave with Priscilla in the funeral procession.

She settled on the old peasant mother a sum that made her comfortable for life and she erected over the mound a shaft of pure Pentelic, carved by the deft hand of Vroutus, the greatest of modern Greek sculptors.

On it appears in relief, after the manner of the ancient Athenian stele, a striking likeness of the young shepherd leaning on his crook, and looking dreamingly across the slopes that he loved so well.

Under the figure is the inscription, in Greek:

"Greater love hath no man than this."

## CHAPTER XXVII

### *The Man in the Black Domino*

ATHENS, as we have seen, is a city wherein "the world amuses itself," to borrow an expression from the French. Nowhere do more people dance, and dance more than at Athens. Get half a dozen peasants together in a café, or a dozen country girls on the green on a fête day, and they join hands and step and jump in the syrtos to the music of pipe, fiddle, bagpipes or accordion. Lacking other music, they wail an interminable tune.

The middle classes polka and dance quadrilles, and the Fifty-Two, led by the indefatigable and numerous princes and princesses, give afternoon hops and evening cotillions. A society girl if she be popular and really in the swim ,attends one or two dancing matinees every day during the height of the season, and two or three evening parties.

All this frivolity and fun reaches its apogee, or culmination, at carnival time, when a series of masked balls are given at the great houses, and parties of young and old in masks and fancy costumes go about the streets, engaging friends and strangers alike in conversation, or breaking in upon any merry rout they may find

in progress. Jane lingered on at Athens until carnival time. The glorious days of early February held her there for one thing, and the bursting forth into bloom of the fragrant almond trees at a time when winter usually tightens his icy grip on the heart of the world in her native Pennsylvania.

She was thoroughly interested, too, in the excavations, though she never walked out to them again, preferring the security of a carriage to the joys of her favorite exercise and the possibility of meeting another Molossian dog.

Prince Georgevitch called often, and she found his visits agreeable. He had been most sympathetic in the matter of Spiro, and understood very well why she was in no humor to attend balls and parties.

"It is a very proper tribute that you are paying to the poor fellow's memory," he commented. "You are, as it were, going into mourning for him for a season, which is creditable to your good heart and noble disposition."

Of Laselle, too, he spoke most feelingly.

"The affair was a great shock to every one," he said, often, "for he was universally estimated. We are all attending that he shall make an explanation. We are hoping it."

This was exactly what Jane was "attending" and hoping, but the looked-for explanation did

not come. She remembered now that Laselle had spoken rather contemptuously of Georgevitch on several occasions, and she began to compare the two men in her mind.

"Perhaps, after all," she reflected, "high ideals and noble sentiments are often a matter of tradition and heredity."

Spiro's tragic death, moreover, had gone far toward freeing her from the obsession that every male of the human species with whom she came in contact knew of, or suspected her riches, and thought only of them. Spiro had loved her, she now believed, as a peasant might love a queen, hopelessly, ignorantly, if you will, and he had braved a terrible death for her cheerfully. All this had the effect, too, of removing that race prejudice which had formerly been strong within her, and of bringing her into closer sympathy with foreigners in general.

Conduct like Laselle's, if it should prove that he were really guilty, was enough to make an American woman willing to expatriate herself.

"The carnival season ends this year," said Georgevitch one afternoon, when calling, "by the masked ball at Madame Schliemann's. It would be a great damage should you not go to see a little of the carnival. If you will to allow me, I will make a little party of Secretaries and their wives or other ladies, and we will pass from there and from several other houses

for a few moments. Perhaps Prince Christopher also shall come with us."

Jane consented to go, and promised to be ready at ten o'clock on the evening named, in mask and a domino.

She was to wear two little devil's horns on her black hood that Georgevitch might know her at all times in the throng and not lose her.

The Prince called for her at the hour appointed, in a rich purple domino with red mask. She was waiting for him in the little parlor of the Spiti, and put on her own mask as she heard the sound of his carriage wheels.

She laughed gaily as he entered the room, saying:

"I am quite excited. I am going to enjoy this adventure immensely. Do let us be going."

He requested her to uncover, first, however, and set the example, explaining:

"You should make sure with whom you are going out. All sorts of tricks are played on these occasions, and even tragedies are enacted. How—how beautiful you are!" he gasped, as she disclosed her face flushed with excitement, her lips parted in a merry smile, her eyes gleaming.

"Oh, I beg your pardon for the clumsy compliment. You uncovered your features so sud-

denly that the words escaped me in the form of a—a''

''An exclamation?'' suggested Jane. ''Your apology is so prettily turned that I insist upon your finishing it, even if I have to help you out.''

They descended to the street together, where they found four carriages waiting, all filled with masked revellers, with the exception of one, in which there were two vacant places. The Prince helped Jane into this, and climbed in beside her.

''We are the Peris,'' he informed her, as the whips cracked and they started off. ''Prince Christopher is in the carriage ahead of us. He is the leader of our band. Whenever you hear the cry, 'Peris this way! Peris this way!' You must move in the direction from the voice, to learn what the orders are.''

They soon drew up at the large, square mansion on University street, named by the famous archæologist who built it, ''A House of Troy.'' The path from the iron gates to the wide marble steps was thronged with maskers, the steps themselves and the landing before the doors were crowded, while groups and couples, less impatient, were strolling among the trees and shrubbery in the beautiful garden. The doors themselves were guarded by several stalwart lackeys in Albanian costume, who were

good naturedly endeavoring to preserve some sort of order, and hold in check the storming party that incessantly surged up the steps with cries of "Apaches!" 'Zulus!" "Argonauts!" "Apaches, this way!" "Chantecleers! Chantecleers!" "Daisies!" These were the mots d'ordre by which the leaders of the separate masked parties were able to call them together when it was desirable to move on to another house, or for other reasons.

Jane caught the contagious excitement, and grasping tightly her escort's arm, edged into the thick of the throng, her eyes fixed upon the doors above, that opened every moment wide enough to let a dozen or so people slip through into the house, then closed again.

There was no stopping now, nor holding back. They were part of a strong current of humanity that flowed steadily along the path and up the broad steps.

"These people," whispered Georgevitch, "are from all classes of society, some of them probably are carpenters, or butchers, or servant girls, or perhaps tourists stopping in Athens. The most of them will walk through the house and out of a door at the other end. Only the invited will remain, and all who wish will unmask at twelve. The doors will close to the public at 11:30."

They arrived before the doors at last, where

the word "Peris," proved an open sesame, admitting the party without a moment's delay.

Once within, Jane found herself in a vast, broad hall, brilliantly lighted, and so crowded that had a person died suddenly of heart disease, the corpse would have remained standing.

A wide stairway at the left was fenced off by means of a silk rope, and on the steps of this, looking down upon the throng, stood the members of the diplomatic corps, in simple evening dress. Among them was the Honorable Franklin Parsons.

In a large parlor at the right of the hall were several members of the Royal family, including the crown Prince and Princess, with their suites. Into their presence were admitted from time to time maskers, who gained entrance by whispering their names to the guards at the door, and who found much amusement in talking to their Royal Highnesses in squeaky voices.

The "Peris" were immediately admitted to this room, and Jane was impressed, as she never had been before, by the social prestige of Georgevitch, which even on a night like this differentiated him and his from the mysterious, nameless throng, and took them into the selected refuge of the great of the land.

"Something of very interesting is going to occur," whispered Georgevitch. "There is a

wager between Mrs. C——, who is a very lively lady and a great court favorite, and his Highness, Prince Christopher. She has bet that she will talk with the Crown Prince for twenty minutes, and tease and mystify him, without his having one idea as to her identiveness."

The lady now advanced, and the trial began. She was evidently extremely witty and clever, to judge from the laughter which her sallies evoked, but for reasons of her own she spoke in Greek, and Jane could not understand a word.

"Let us to find a quiet corner and sit down," said Georgevitch at last. "This cannot be very interesting to you."

He lead her to a sofa at a far end of the room.

"Oh, this wealth, this wealth!" he murmured, "what a wonderful thing it is; and it makes not much difference how it was gained. This that you see here, it is new. It was gained in the commerce, in Russia. The man who got it together is dead and his widow and his children are now spending it to entertain kings and princes. I have a small income left me from the fortune of my fathers. I could, too, make the commerce there in America, and I could be happy with the woman I love, happier than any kings."

Jane saw what was coming, but she felt that

she must parry for a little more time. She actually perceived that she was not sure as to what answer she wished to give. Perhaps, and the thought thrilled her so that she felt herself trembling in her voluminous domino—perhaps she would like to say "yes!"

But the impending question and the answer were so momentous!

"Prince," she interrupted hastily, "I saw the American Minister on the stairway. Will you take me to him immediately? I have just thought of something that I would like to ask him and he may go away. And she arose.

"Certainly," said Georgevitch, rising and offering his arm. "How splendid your eyes are!" he murmured, as they moved toward the door. "There are none others similar with them here tonight. You did not need the horns to identify you with me. And even if I did not see your eyes, I could feel your presence." His voice, though low, was vibrant with passion.

As they passed the door and worked their way through the dense crowd, a plain black domino and mask, undistinguishable from a hundred others, followed them close, very close, unobserved in all that throng and excitement.

Had the domino been suddenly torn off, the revellers would have been astonished to see

that its wearer held clutched tight against his breast a naked poignard.

As Georgevitch had said, tragedies are sometimes enacted at Athens during carnival time.

## CHAPTER XXVIII

### *Miss Schuyler Removes Her Mask*

A WHISPERED word from Georgevitch to the tall Albanian who was in charge of the silken cord at the foot of the stairway, and it was held aside for Miss Vandervoert to pass. Mounting the stairs she stood beside Mr. Parsons and began to talk to him in the squeaky voice which she had heard the other maskers use, in English, trying to imitate the peculiar accent and foreign phrases of Georgevitch, which were fresh in her ears. She had nothing particular to say to Mr. Parsons. She had simply fled to him as Americans do to their consul or minister, when they are in perplexity or feel the need of moral support.

Mr. Parsons laid his hands upon her shoulders and looked keenly into her eyes.

"Perhaps you would rather talk French?" he said smiling.

"No, your Excellency," she squeaked, "I have studied the French but I have not the occasion to make practice. If your Excellency would prefer to make the converse in my native Hungarian?"

Mr. Parsons offered her his arm and led her up the steps, a little higher, away from the group of diplomats.

"You cannot disguise that Yankee voice sufficiently to deceive me, Miss Vandervoert," he laughed. "Is your ancient Greek friend with you tonight?"

"I am afraid I am a bad actor," replied Jane, "or perhaps it is a part of the diplomat's business to look behind masks. No, Priscilla is not with me tonight. I came because I was invited, I am a Peri!"

Jane cast her eye from time to time at the foot of the stairs, where Georgevitch in his purple domino stood immovable. He had no intention of losing her for an instant.

"Have you heard anything more of Mr. Laselle?" she asked to prolong the conversation. She had no idea that anything farther had been heard.

"Yes," replied Mr. Parsons.

"What is it?" she cried, forgetting her disguise. "Is there proof that he is innocent?"

The minister considered for a moment. He evidently decided that, whatever the kind or degree of her interest, she ought to know the truth. So he looked gravely into her eyes and said:

"It is positively known that the code was sold. His resignation has been accepted and he is out of the service. He will not be prosecuted. The incident, so far as he is concerned, may be considered as closed."

Jane walked slowly down the stairs and rejoined the Prince, who gave her arm a little proprietary squeeze.

"You stayed one age," he murmured, as they moved away, "had you delayed much longer, I should have come after you. But as soon as you are once more with me, I am again contented."

Jane remained with Prince Georgevitch during the rest of the evening, dancing with him several times in the large parlor reserved for royalty and the Fifty-Two, or sitting with him conversing in a low tone. A pair of fierce dark eyes watched them continually through the slits of a dark mask, and a little man in a black domino kept very close to them whenever they mingled with the throng in the great hall.

When at midnight all except the invited guests had supposedly departed, this person stayed, an easy thing to do in a house still thronged with merrymakers, many of whom remained masked.

The intimates of the royal family and the members of the court circle now began to gather round the Princes and Princesses and uncover their faces, laughing and crying such things as:

"I mystified your Royal Highness perfectly!"

"I am the one whom your Royal Highness mistook for the Princess Philunger."

"It is hard to believe," cried the Prince addressed. "Put on your mask again and talk in that German dialect."

"Bravo! Brava!"

"And I am the one who talked as a Chinaman. Did your Royal Highness really think that I was a Chinaman?"

"A Chinaman, was it? We all thought you were taking off Rostand's chantecleer."

"That's one on you, d'Albert! Cock-a-doodle-doo!"

"Your Royal Highness," said Georgevitch to the Crown Princess when, after the fun had subsided a bit, a favorable opportunity presented itself, "I crave permission to present my affianced bride," and he removed his mask.

"Indeed, Georgevitch, at last!" exclaimed the Princess sweetly and with sudden sympathy. "I congratulate you," and she extended her hand to him. "Georgevitch is presenting his fiancée," she whispered to her husband.

The Crown Prince stooped down from his great height and looked into Jane's eyes.

"Those bright eyes promise much," he said. "I command you to unmask."

Jane took off her mask with trembling fingers, and her face, suddenly bursting into view, like the moon from behind a cloud, nestling in the hood of her domino and flushed

with sweet confusion, conquered all hearts with its loveliness.

The Crown Princess stooped and kissed her.

"What is your name, my dear?" she asked. "I have met you before, but I do not remember it, or I heard it but indistinctly."

"Schuyler, Madame, Jane Vandervoert Schuyler." The time for dropping the alias had arrived.

"An American, I believe?"

"Yes, Madame, from Philadelphia."

A few moments later the little man in the black domino left the house, and walked rapidly around the corner, where he found a carriage waiting. Waking the driver, who was asleep on the box, he gave him some directions, and climbed into the vehicle, in one corner of which a man was waiting for him.

"Well, Foresti," said Panas as they drove off. "Speak man, do not let us burst!"

"I have done nothing," replied Foresti. "It was not necessary."

"Not necessary, bah! You may go to the Prince of Tarachia with that story yourself. I shall not come with you."

"Nevertheless, it was not necessary, and the Prince will commend my discretion. Georgevitch has this night put himself out of the running. He has publicly announced his engagement to the rich American girl and has re-

ceived the congratulations of the royal family. The American has done our business, and, incidentally, saved Georgevitch's life."

Panas whistled.

"You are right," he said. "The Prince will be glad to hear this. There will be no reason for putting Georgevitch out of the way, when he is no longer an obstacle in the path of the Prince's ambitions."

Foresti shuddered.

"I would have done it had it been necessary," he said, "but it's an awful thing to do!"

"Nevertheless it could be done in a masked ball," commented Panas, who had been thinking much on the subject, while alone in the carriage. "One thrust from beneath a domino, and you let go of the knife. There you are in a dense throng, all excited, chattering, laughing. Nobody sees the thrust. You are one of the five hundred others."

The carriage rattled on through the streets, deserted save for an occasional group of belated revellers, in costume or domino, betaking themselves to the cafés and breweries to finish the night.

## CHAPTER XXIX

*Prince Georgevitch Buys a Bunch of Violets*

PRINCE GEORGEVITCH reached his rooms on Solon Street at about 4 A. M. He was not the least particle fatigued, despite the advanced hour, nor did he drag his feet up the stairway to the second story as was his wont after having been bored from early evening till early morn. On the contrary, he lifted the skirts of his domino coquettishly and tripped up the steps whistling his favorite, "Donna e mobile."

Not that he believed for one moment that this particular woman was changeable. He had adopted, through habit, this method of expressing triumph or satisfaction.

Entering his room, he turned on the electricity and took off his mask and domino leisurely, pausing every now and then to think: and the more he thought the better satisfied he became. She was an American, it was true, but it had become quite the fashion for the nobility to marry rich Americans.

Having divested himself of mask and domino, he went to a full length mirror, and took a good long look at himself.

"Prince Nicolas Ivan Alexander Maria Georgevitch of Croatia," he muttered. "I

present you to yourself. True it isn't quite the same thing as Nicolas, etc., etc., Georgevitch, Prince of Croatia, would be, but with wealth and rank already yours, power will be easy of attainment."

Georgevitch smiled at the elegant reflection in the mirror, attired in evening dress, the jet black hair disarranged by the hood of the domino. He smiled good naturedly, somewhat ironically, and the large mouth with its perfect teeth, and the mournful black eyes smiled back at him.

"I beg your pardon, Prince Georgevitch, of Croatia," he added, "I should have said, 'wealth, rank and brains.' I have not been in the habit of giving you credit for much of the last named, but now I think I must grant you a fair amount of them. You have succeeded in winning a prize that has been much struggled for. In fact, the lady had fled to the ends of the earth, and had concealed her identity, in order to escape from her too ardent wooers for a brief breathing spell. Who knows how many Italian Princes and Austrian Barons and French Counts have laid their coronets in the dust at her feet?"

It was at least 5 o'clock when he at last got into bed and drew the covers about his shoulders.

He was sleeping soundly at 10 when his

valet waked him by tapping gently on the bedroom door.

"What the devil do you want?" called Georgevitch, who was very sleepy.

"I beg your pardon, sir, but it's a letter from the legation. His Excellency sent word that I was to give it to you without fail before you go out."

"Bring it here, then," commanded Georgevitch, "but I would like to know by what right His Excellency wakes me up in the early morning."

"It's after 10 o'clock, Sir."

"So, bring me some breakfast, then, and be quick about it."

Georgevitch read his letter. It was simply a request to present himself at 3 o'clock at the Austrian legation. It was not an invitation. It was official, and in the form of a command.

"Some routine business," he muttered, "or perhaps he wants me to try a new Hungarian horse for him."

After partaking of the coffee and rolls, which his well trained man brought almost immediately, Georgevitch gave orders that he was not to be disturbed under any circumstances before 1 o'clock, and composed himself again for sleep.

The next time he awoke he felt thoroughly refreshed. His mind was alert and reverted

immediately to Jane and the circumstances of the preceding evening. While eating his lunch, which he took in his rooms, he thought over the feasibility of asking her to make a settlement on him. A prince, without money of his own, is ridiculous, even though married to a rich woman. She had $10,000,000, his friend, the Austrian consul, had said; she ought to divide with him, of course. She could give him a small matter of $1,000,000 or 5,000,000 francs without noticing it.

But this, he realized, was a very delicate question with Jane; the American women were queer and unreasonable in such matters. They were not properly brought up. This was dangerous ground. He decided to take the advice of a shrewd woman friend of his.

At the corner of Kephyssia and University streets, just opposite the Grande Bretagne, the fashionable hotel of Athens, is the flower market. There, on long tables under the evergreen pepper trees, the gardeners spread out their wares, and in all seasons of the year do they make a brave show of wild blossoms from the Attic plain and from the slopes of Hymettus, besides a great variety of cultivated flowers. Here one may find in unparalelled and inexhaustible profusion fresh and fragrant violets from October until February. Indeed, these are the typical blossoms of Attica, grow-

ing with such prodigality that one fancies the hill-slopes and the sky tinted, during the winter rains, with an infusion of their delicate leaves. Often the heavens at sunset or sunrise seem to reflect the hues of fields of violets.

Roses are found all the year, little ones, red as heart's blood in winter, big pink ones from Kephyssia in summer, and a wonderful variety at all other seasons.

Autumn is rich in Chrysanthemums, of many colors, and the delicate wild cyclamens, too, peep from the ground after the first rains of October.

In January or even in December, the anemones spring along the mountain paths and on the ancient battle fields, pink, mauve, heliotrope, dark red, purple. The almond trees burst into blossom soon after on the violet hillsides, and branches covered with their pale pink, fragrant flowers find their way to the vendor's tables.

April is the season of hyacinths in many shades of pink and white and dainty heliotrope; and in April, too, at Easter tide, the lilacs open their tiny petals, the more common variety and the rarer white, of exquisite perfume.

Carnations of all kinds, and lilies, begin in May and last until deep into summer.

To the flower market Prince Georgevitch now hied himself and, after careful selection, pur-

chased a large bunch of violets for the sum of two francs, and with them he hastened to the Spiti Merlin.

"Yes, Miss Vandervoert was in."

He sent up his card and was told that she would receive him in the private sitting room. He mounted the two flights of marble stairs and knocked at Jane's door. A sweet voice told him to "Come in," and he entered, to find, much to his disgust, Priscilla in full regalia, sitting on a couch. Jane advanced to meet him, holding out her hand, which he took and held, looking tenderly into her eyes. He had intended to take her in his arms and to kiss her passionately, but the presence of Priscilla, whom he mentally consigned to warmer regions. seemed to preclude this. So, with infinite tact and exquisite grace, he stooped and kissed her cheek, causing her to blush divinely. He had found no opportunity to kiss her the night before.

"He seemed at that moment," declared Priscilla afterward, "like the incarnation of Launcelot."

"I bring you these poor violets," said the Prince, offering them, "They were the best I could find, so late in the day. In effect, I have always thought flowers beautiful till now."

"And so they are! and so are these! and how fragrant they are!"

"Ah, no! No flowers seem beautiful to me now, that I wish to find some worthy for my Jane!"

Priscilla came bounding forward.

"I congratulate you both!" she cried, with honest fervor. "How glad I am that this great happiness has come to my dearest friend. And you, Prince, I congratulate you on having won the heart of the sweetest, best, truest girl on earth. When you know Jane as well as I do, you will remember what I say to you today."

"I know it without that you should tell me," said Georgevitch, as he sat down upon the divan between the two ladies. "I am only disappointed in one thing. I have made me a romance, a dream. I have so loved my Jane that I have said, 'I will go to America, and give up my title and work for her, make the commerce,' and the romance of the thing, the idea to become a new man in that great new world have made a strong appeal to me." Both his hands were clenched and there was a dreamy look in his eyes. "Oh, God, to think of it! To go to America and work for my beautiful Jane! But last night she tells me that she is a very rich woman, and all the world, what will it say? That it is the same old thing. Behold, another titled foreigner has found an American heiress. But my Jane will know that it is not so, will she not?"

"Yes, Nicolas," murmured Jane, laying her hand on his, "we will know that it was not like that, and what do we care for the world?"

At the touch of that firm, warm hand, Georgevitch felt his heart beat faster, and a delicious thrill invade his entire being. This was the sincerest and noblest moment of his life. Had he been alone with Jane, he would have pressed her to his heart.

"Thanks, my darling, for saying that," he replied, "but you will see that there are great opportunities in the world even for a Prince, who wills to seize them, that there is work to be done among men by a Georgevitch yet!"

"How splendid he is!" soliloquized Priscilla, aloud. But it was nearly three o'clock, and Georgevitch explained that he must go to the Legation.

"You must not let even me keep you from your business, Nicolas," said Jane, dropping unconsciously into the American girls' formula.

"Tomorrow morning," promised Georgevitch, at the door, "I must be at the flower market early."

"You will not find anything that I shall like better than my violets, no matter how early you go. There is one little thing I wanted to say. I am sorry I did not tell you all about myself sooner. You planned to renounce your

title and rank for me, and that must have caused you suffering, I am sorry."

"It gave me joy," replied Georgevitch, "if the recompense were to be you. Of course, it will be pleasanter to have both you and the title, but were I compelled to choose between you and a throne, I would not hesitate for a moment!"

Jane believed him.

## CHAPTER XXX

### *And is Conditionally Offered a Crown*

ARRIVING at the Austrian Legation, Georgevitch was shown immediately into His Excellency's private office, a luxurious large room, where, to his surprise, he saw their Excellencies of the other Great Powers, gathered as if for some important question.

They all arose and shook hands with him cordially, which still further mystified him, as Excellencies are not wont to arise when a Secretary or Attache enters a room. After the preliminary hand shaking, everybody took seats, and Sir William Winter nodded in the direction of Count Von Alutius, who arose, cleared his throat, and took his gold cigarette case from his pocket which he passed back and forth between his fingers as he talked in French, the language of diplomacy.

"My Imperial Master," he began, glancing at the cigarette case, "believes in the integrity of the Turkish Empire, and I wish it understood that nothing which I say on this occasion is in any way a concession to those who hold opposite views. The business which calls us here together, us, the representatives of four-fifths of the power and wealth of the civilized globe,

has reference to the Province of Tarachia. The anomalous condition of that province is a fait accompli, is it not, Excellencies?"

All the Excellencies bowed solemnly, though there was a slight twinkle in the Saxon eye of Sir William Winter.

"We are met in the interest of peace, local, so far as the Province is concerned, and the peace of Europe. The status of that Province must be definitely defined. It has therefore been resolved to erect it into an autonomous Principality, as was till lately the case of Bulgaria, under the Suzerainty of Turkey, and the protection of the Great Powers. After long and careful consideration, acting under the instruction of our various governments, we have decided to offer the post of reigning Prince of this newly erected realm to Nicolas Georgevitch, of Austria, under the title of Nicolas I, Prince of Tarachia. Do you all agree to this, Excellencies?"

"We do," replied their Excellencies.

"The salary," continued von Alutins, "is fixed at 50,000 English pounds a year, guaranteed by the Great Powers, to be raised from the revenues of the Province."

The Minister stopped, thought for a few moments, gazed at the coronet on the gold cigarette case as if for further inspiration or suggestion and then sat down. There was a

shuffle of feet in the room and all turned toward Georgevitch, as if to congratulate him, when Sir William Winter suddenly arose.

"Your Excellency has forgotten one thing," he said.

"Ah, yes, a mere detail" assented von Alutius, smiling good naturedly.

"The post," explained Sir William, "is to be hereditary and is to pass to the issue of Prince Nicolas' body, that the perpetual prosperity of the province and tranquility of Europe may be assured. It is necessary also, that his Highness should make a strong alliance that shall connect him by marriage with the reigning houses of Europe. We have therefore chosen as his consort the Princess Elizabeth of Bremenstein, whose father is German, and connected through his mother, with the royal families of Great Britain and Denmark, and through his own marriage, with that of Russia."

Sir William sat down.

"Do I understand, Excellencies?" asked Georgevitch, after a silence of several seconds, "that the contracting of this alliance is a necessary condition?"

"Quite so," replied Sir William. "We are all agreed now, and the reopening of any matter of detail might involve us in interminable discussion."

"May I have a few moments private conver-

sation with my honored chief, before giving my answer?" enquired Georgevitch.

This being granted, he retired to another room with Van Stransky, who informed him that the Princess Elizabeth was an excellent German housefrau with a high complexion and a round face; that she was stout and healthy and sure to become the mother of a numerous progeny, "and it's the policy of Royalties, you know," he told him facetiously, "to breed like rabbits."

He was also assured that, if he proved himself a strong, wise ruler, the Principality might become a kingdom within ten years, and outlined to him in a few words the various probabilities in European political changes which would contribute to that result. There was no doubt that the Princess would consent, as her father was enthusiastic, and declared himself able to speak for her.

Georgevitch re-entered the presence of the Ministers on Stransky's arm.

"His highness accepts the proposal in its entirety," announced the latter.

Georgevitch bowed.

"I thank your Excellencies," he said, "and hope ever to merit the confidence which you so generously repose in me."

## CHAPTER XXXI

### *Royal Destinies Impose Royal Deeds*

AS Georgevitch left the Austrian Minister's private office, several of their Excellencies also arose to take their leave. As usual, he stepped gracefully aside with a bow, to let them pass out first, in that order of precedence so rigidly observed among themselves, but they all insisted, with much good humor, that he walk out ahead, alone.

A short, playful struggle took place over this point and he was obliged to yield.

What a change had taken place in his fortunes in a few moments' time! He had entered that building a poor Prince, of the kind so common in Europe: the last representative of an impoverished and crumbled house, the mere shadow or ghost of a prince, who had actually at times contemplated dropping his title and becoming a man. Recently fianced, it is true, to a wealthy American girl, a brilliant lot in its way, but a common one shared by the desperate riff-raff of European nobility.

Now, presto! change! He was the virtual ruler of about 1,500,000 turbulent subjects, and the elected spouse of a really royal personage.

In a very short time he would be connected by marriage with half the crowned heads of Europe. That a crown should in time rest upon his own he was fully resolved, he was confident. He seemed to feel, even now, its cool, hard rim pressing his brow. Nothing should stand in his way. He would keep his eye fixed on this splendid goal night and day. He possessed, he knew, the shrewdness, the patience, the courage, the supreme selfishness; if necessary the cruelty, to win this end. He must find out, first, who were really the wise men of his nation, and attach them to him. He must begin, immediately also, unostentatiously at first, to develop the military strength of the country. True, he would have the support of the protecting Powers, but great powers like Providence, helped those most who helped themselves. A small nation of fighters, and the Tarachians *were* fighters, if thoroughly drilled and provided with modern arms, might have something to say as to its own destiny when the hour struck. Walking as one in a dream, he arrived at his own door, and ascended the steps to his room. His man came in and gave him a letter. There was something in the fineness of the stationery, a certain faintness of the hand writing, with its long "h's" and "l's" that suggested a woman. Georgevitch did not remember ever having seen that script before.

He opened the envelope and read:

"Dear Nicolas:

"I am going out to Priscilla's to stay a day or two. She has come and fairly carried me off by force. You would think by the way she carries on, that she is about to lose me immediately, for good and all. I am going, incidentally, in a carriage, and shall return by the same tiresome, but safe, means of locomotion. So, you see, if you want me, you will know where to find me, only don't come before tomorrow afternoon, as I have promised to give this entire forenoon and evening, and all of the forenoon tomorrow to Priscilla.

Jane."

Georgevitch leaned back in his chair, crossed his legs, and sat for some time in thought with eyes closed. We must do him the credit to say that his face looked haggard as he sat thus, and grey, and that there were certain lines indicating weariness and pain settled about his mouth. He held the letter in his hand, dreaming, for though his eyes were closed, he saw a vision: the figure of a tall, queenly woman, with luminous, brave, brown eyes, that looked at one in a level, honest way. Eyes they were of tenderness and melting sweetness, yet capable of the scorn that blights and withers. He saw a beautiful face, strong,

yet sweet, red cheeks slightly browned with the sun and wind of many a long walk in the open, a pair of full, delicious lips, and a low, broad forehead, surmounted by a thick mass of straw-colored hair, fine and glossy as spider's silk.

Now, it seemed that those reddish brown eyes were looking at him more in sorrow than in scorn, and he realized that he was feeling sorry for himself, that the brilliant, bejewelled prize which he was reaching up to seize was no talisman of happiness. If a man be anything of a man, if he possess a spark of the immortal within him, either god or devil, greatness of fate brings greatness of soul, for good or for evil, for joy or for suffering; yet now, as he contemplated with his mind's eye the woman before him, for the moment all the artificial standards of society, the distinctions of birth and of place crumbled away, became mere superstitions rooted in the soil of immemorial error, and this daughter of the people stood there, in every fiber of her stately body, in every drop of her good red blood, in every impulse of her noble soul, a real queen.

He recovered himself with an effort, and sat up straight with his eyes wide open. Tossing the letter upon the table he arose and walked to and fro, thinking now, no longer dreaming. It occurred to him that this defence of Jane

which his better self had been making, was attributable to but one cause; he actually loved her! If so, then it was his weaker self which had been pleading her cause, and the road to a throne is not for the weak. For the love of women, crown princes had renounced their rights to succession, had even committed suicide rather than accept their high destiny and the conditions which surrounded it. These were weak men.

A man who has a crown in view, should, if necessary, free himself from all plebeian entanglements, that he may be in a position to make the alliance demanded by his high destiny.

Such things had been done, Georgevitch knew. A mere verbal promise, therefore to a daughter of the people, should not trouble his conscience at all.

Fortified by these reflections he sat down and wrote a letter to Jane, in French. He begged her to regard this communication as confidential for, though the great news which he imparted was of a public character, it had not yet been officially announced. "The fact is," he said, "I am no longer my own man. I am in the hands of God, who has selected me as his instrument in shaping the destinies and history of a people, and in preserving the peace and tranquility of Europe. Another alliance has been arranged for me, which I am powerless to

reject. My happiness cannot be considered for a moment, nor can I consider it, when the will of God, and the lives, perhaps, of thousands are at stake and the happiness of innumerable families. For I love you, dear Jane. You are, and always will be the one love of my life. How much I suffer in writing this, I shall not even attempt to tell you." At this point he ceased writing, and thought for a long time, and at last he concluded to hint at a morganatic marriage, as a method not uncommon and considered quite honorable, by which, if she loved him as much as he did her, they might still unite their lives. He begged her to give him an opportunity to talk with her on this matter, to explain it to her and point out the advantages of such a solution, and he signed himself her "affectionate and eternally devoted, though desolated

Nicolas."

Georgevitch had not much hopes that Jane would accept this proposition, but it was the only one which he, as a royal personage, could make to her. If she refused indignantly and scornfully, as he thought most probable, then his relations with her, his acquaintance even, would be irretrievably at an end, which his sounder judgment told him would be best for all concerned. If she accepted, and it was an

axiom of his that no one could tell, not the woman herself, what a woman would do when her affections were involved, why then, he would risk the entanglement. She was worth it, and anything was possible to kings and reigning prices, except legally marrying whom they liked. At any rate, he did not think best to see her and talk with her until after she knew how matters stood, and what his own position was with reference to them.

It was almost dinner time, and he needed his man, so he told him to go out with the letter the first thing in the morning.

The man Elias was an old and faithful servant, a Montenegran, who, besides his own language, spoke Greek and some French.

He knew Jane by sight, and he knew the shepherd's house where Priscilla made her home.

Georgevitch, who was sleepless and excited, as was quite natural in a man who, in one day had accepted a Principality and a royal Princess, and had jilted a millionairess, spent the evening at the club, playing poker.

As his income was now £50,000 a year, he played heavily and carelessly, and, as is usually the case with men who do not care whether they win or lose, he won. His chief opponent in the game was young Schuyler, looking dissipated and blubbery.

Georgevitch awoke about ten o'clock the next morning, and called for his coffee.

"Did you deliver the letter, Elias?" he asked of his man.

"Yes, sir, I have just returned from there."

"Did you give it into the lady's own hands?"

"No, sir."

"What! What do you mean? I told you to deliver it into the lady's own hands."

"Begging your Highness' pardon, but you made no mention of the way which it was to be delivered."

"Well, perhaps not. But you have been in my service for ten years, and I hope that I am not just now about to discover that you are an ass."

"The lady, your Highness, was not there. She had gone out very early in the morning with her friend who wears masquerading costume the year round. They took their lunch with them. I went to the excavations and they were not there. So I returned to the cottage, and told the shepherd's wife that I had a letter for the lady. She showed me her room, which was open, and I put the letter on her table, under her candle, where she cannot help seeing it, the first thing when she returns."

"Hm," growled Georgevitch, "the sequel will show whether you have done well or not. Now go, and wake me at twelve."

The Prince, however was not destined to sleep till twelve. At half past eleven about, he was awakened by an uproar in the streets below, frantic and joyful shouts. He rang for his man and demanded.

"What's that hullaballoo?"

"The Constitution, Your highness."

"What Constitution?"

"The Sultan of Turkey has granted a constitutional government. The Greeks are greatly excited. They believe that their brothers, now living under the Turkish government, will now enjoy full rights and privileges, liberty in fact, and equality."

Georgevitch, springing from bed, went to the window and looked down into the street, where he saw a straggling, yelling mob surging along, following two huge banners, the Cross of Greece, the Star and Crescent of Islam.

"Long live Turkey!" they cried, "Zeto! Zeto! On to the Turkish legation!"

Even as he stood, thus looking, a loud knock was heard at his door. Elias opened, and took a letter from a messenger, which he gave to his master. It said:

"My dear Georgevitch: Come to the Austrian legation at once. I wish to see you on a matter of the greatest importance.

Stransky."

## CHAPTER XXXII

*We Are Mere Puppets of Fate*

GEORGEVITCH'S first impulse was to take his time about going to the legation. The minister, in sending thus for him, was doubtless acting from force of habit, but Stransky should not thus forget himself. Reigning princes were not sent for; one went to them.

A few moments reflection, however, convinced him that Stransky was right. Georgevitch was not yet officially installed. The post had simply been offered him, and he had accepted it. The matter was definitely settled, of course, he was as much reigning Prince of Tarachia, as though he actually were occupying the throne, for he had the word of the Great Powers behind him. Nevertheless, he had not resigned as military attache of the Austrian legation. The situation amused him. Hurriedly dressing, he sent his servant for a cab, and drove to the legation.

Stransky was walking up and down in the hall, in considerable agitation. This surprised Georgevitch, who had never seen him show agitation before. His Excellency took the Prince by the arm, affectionately, and fairly pulled him into a little room off the hall, used as a

smoking and bridge room when receptions and balls were in progress.

"Georgevitch," he said, "the ministers are meeting here again, a special, hurried council. Great and unseen events have taken place. They will have something—something of importance to communicate to you. I wished to see you first, to prepare you."

"To prepare me?" His Excellency was still holding him by the arm. His voice was actually tender, that of a man to a friend, and no longer that of a trained diplomat.

"Yes,—that is, that you may have time to collect yourself, to prepare your answer. The Sultan of Turkey has been forced by the progressive party to sign a liberal Constitution. The leaven of progress, enlightenment, modernity, has been working in that country. This time, it is believed, the Constitution has come to stay. The Young Turks are in power."

"And what has that to do with me?" asked Georgevitch, surprised at himself that he did not see. "Important instructions as to the manner of governing Tarachia? Another and different alliance, perhaps?" and he smiled. "As to that, I have no choice. I am entirely in the hands of their Excellencies—of your Excellencies. I desire to be dutiful. I have not yet irretrievably fixed my affections upon the excellent and supposedly prolific Elizabeth."

Stransky gently pushed the Prince into a chair and sat down facing him. A dim light came into the room through the half closed blinds. A smell of stale cigarette smoke clung to the curtains and the furniture.

"Important instructions," repeated His Excellency. "Yes, very important. You see, my dear Nicolas, under a constitution and enlightened government, the new Turkey will have the sympathy of the Powers. There will not be a disposition to discourage or embarrass her by taking away any of her territory. There will be no reason for doing so until she has had a chance. This unexpected and timely move on the part of the Young Turks, this, in reality, brilliant coup, has changed the entire situation."

The minister paused, remained silent. It was Georgevitch who spoke at last. His voice was like that of a man awakening from a dream.

"You mean," he asked, "that the Powers withdraw my nomination as Prince of Tarachia?"

"It amounts to the same thing," replied the minister. "In other words, there will be no Principality. Tarachia will remain an inseparable portion of the Turkish Empire. Will you come in with me and see their Excellencies? Your dignified bearing will, I am sure, make them all regret the necessity of this announcement."

They arose, and the minister walked out of the room ahead of Georgevitch.

In the hall a thought occurred to the latter which caused him to act so precipitately that the minister feared that he was suddenly bereft of his senses. Seizing his hat and cane from a table, he darted for the door. Stransky sprang after him and caught him by the arm, crying:

"Georgevitch! Nicolas! Restrain yourself! I beg of you, man!"

He was reassured when he saw Georgevitch's face, which, though showing intense excitement, was not the face of one suddenly seized with madness, or suicidal frenzy.

"Tell their Excellencies that I accept the inevitable without a murmur," he said, hurriedly, "that I thank them for their interest—oh, you know, Stransky, say it for me. Only one thing I ask of them, of you all—that this whole business be kept secret—but I think you will do that anyway. Good morning."

Flinging open the door, he dashed down the steps, got into the cab, and drove hurriedly to his house.

Jumping out of the cab, he ran up his own stairs, and almost knocked over the faithful Elias, who came out into the hall to see what the matter was.

"Come into the room, here, quick!" commanded the Prince, "You say you put it on her table, in her room?"

"What, Excellency?"

"The letter, you idiot! The letter you carried this morning! Speak!"

"Yes, your Excellency. Under her candle, where she cannot fail to see it. I would have given it to—"

"Peace, idiot, Pig, silence! You say she had gone out for the day, taking her lunch, with that masquerading skin of lard, the other American woman?"

"Yes, Excellency."

"Then, if there is a God in heaven, if the Devil is not governing the universe, the letter will be there yet.

Listen. You must get me that letter, before the lady gets it. She must never read it. It should be easy. Simply walk in and take it. If any of those fool shepherds are around, and try to take it from you, fight for it. If necessary, eat it. Don't ask for it, stroll near to her room, and take it, and walk away. If they have locked the door, get in by some ruse. If you succeed, I will give you ten thousand francs. If you fail, don't come back here again, do you understand?"

"Yes, Your Highness."

"Go, then! what are you waiting for? Stop, take the cab downstairs, and drive like the devil about three quarters of the way. Then leave the cab and walk the rest, so as not to at-

tract attention. Enter the court quietly. Perhaps no one will notice you till you have got into the room and taken the letter. Now go!"

"Yes, your Highness."

The Prince paced his room and smoked innumerable cigarettes. All his inherited sang froid, all his diplomatic training and something more were needed now, to help him preserve his usual calm demeanor. In fact, had any of his friends or colleagues chanced to drop in at that moment, the caller would have found Georgevitch most unbecomingly excited. A listener at the door might have believed him suddenly stricken with madness, for he was talking to himself, swearing occasionally in his native Croatian. He was calling somebody very uncomplimentary names such as "Ass! Fool! Dolt!" and other epithets of like nature, so peculiar to his mother tongue and so expressive in it, that they cannot be translated.

As he thus paced back and forth, he spied his image in the full length mirror and stopped suddenly before it, gazing contemptuously at the pale, agitated, disheveled countenance, which repaid him with equal contempt though it had smiled so approvingly back at him but a short time before.

Beating his temples with clenched fists, he cried again, "Fool! Fool! Donkey! Dolt! With your letters! You sit down and write a letter,

like a school girl, and send it off! You, a prince. yes, a Prince of Asses!"

For the ministers of the Great Powers, he had no present objurgations, nor in fact, did he feel any keen resentment. The episode of Tarachia, the Principality, the possible crown, all that was a dream to him now, a splendid dream, perhaps, but nevertheless, a vision of a brief sleep from which he had awakened.

Jane and her millions were real. He had won them through long and concentrated and skillful effort, and he had lost them, perhaps, in a moment of inconceivable stupidity.

Seizing his hat and cane, he went down into the street and walked briskly for a long distance. He felt that he would stifle there in the room. There was only one way for Elias to return. He would meet him, and learn half an hour earlier what had happened. He traversed thus the entire length of Kephysia street, and took the road toward Priscilla's house. He walked and walked, and yet no signs of Elias.

He regretted now that he had not gone himself for the letter. He had been deterred by the fear that Jane had perhaps returned and had read it. Moreover, he had been so distracted, that he had not stopped to think, to plan.

But now, where was Elias? The man had surely blundered, something had happened to him. He found the carriage and team stand-

ing in the shadow of a great rock, about three fourths of the distance to the shepherd's house. The coachman was sound asleep on the box. Georgevitch raised his cane to punch him savagely in the ribs, when Elias' head suddenly appeared over the summit of a little hill. The Prince hastened to meet him.

"Why were you so long, brute?" he demanded ungraciously. "Where is the letter?"

Elias was radiant.

"Your Highness entrusted to me a delicate mission," he explained volubly. "I must not fail. Leaving the apartment, I said to myself, "here is need of brains."

At this point Elias placed his index finger upon his forehead, and kept it there for some time. "Ha! An idea! I must have an excuse for entering the lady's room, for appearing at the cottage. I have it! I go to the florists and buy an enormous bouquet of roses, a magnificent bouquet, such as your Highness would himself have bought. This takes some little time, but it was well. Armed with this, I got to the cottage, I present myself. The shepherd's wife is there. 'Behold' I say, 'the beautiful roses which my master sends to the tall lady.' I start for the room. She comes with me, admiring. I throw the roses down on top of the candle and the letter, thank the Virgin, was still there. There was no opportunity of taking the letter,

unless I say, 'Your Highness has sent it, Your Highness desires it back.' This I did not wish to do, unless it should be absolutely necessary, as I had not said that the letter was from you. I come away from the room and talk awhile with the shepherd's wife. I think while I talk," here the index finger went again to the forehead. "Suddenly I say 'I will take one of those beautiful roses with me. She will not miss one.' The shepherd's wife laughs and says 'go take one for your trouble.' She does not rise from the porch where she is sitting. I run, I grab the letter, put it in my pocket, and come out, smelling the rose. I stick it against the nose of the shepherd's wife, who takes a deep smell, and says, 'delicious!' Then I hurry away."

"But where is the letter?" repeated Georgevitch, "give it to me."

"One moment, Highness, one little moment. I am hurrying along, knowing your Highness' anxiety. I have not yet reached the carriage when I hear a great clatter of hoofs behind me. I look around. Holy Mother! It is the shepherd and his big son, the giant, mounted on asses. I am frightened, I say, 'The shepherd's wife has seen that I have taken the letter. They are coming after me.' I think, very fast —" again the finger to the forehead. "I tear the letter into one million fragments, thus and

thus, and I give them to the wind. The shepherd and his son arrive, they pass me as though the devil were after them. Who knows where they were going? At any rate, not for the letter. Then I am sorry that I have not brought it. But what to do? It was now too late."

"You have done well," said Georgevitch, with a sigh of relief. "I regret having called you an ass. Go home now afoot and leave the carriage to me."

"And the ten thousand francs, Highness?"

"They are yours, in a short time. Don't worry about them. Consider them as yours."

Georgevitch strolled over to the shepherd's cottage and enquired for Jane.

She had not returned, so he wrote on a visiting card, with his fountain pen:

"Dearest Jane:—I sent you a letter this morning saying I could not to come today, on account from important business. Later I sent some flowers, and told my man to take the letter, as I hoped to come. Now I am here, and do not find you, and must hurry back. How am I desolated! Your unfortunate Nicolas."

Giving this to the shepherd's wife he drove away.

## CHAPTER XXXIII

*The Discovery in the Underground Passage*

PRISCILLA and Jane were waiting for Georgevitch in the parlor of the Spiti. He was to drive them out to the excavations, where the "campaign," as the Professor described it, was nearing completion.

"He has such beautiful eyes," said the New England old maid, "so beautiful, so large and liquid! And there is something so royal in his bearing, so dignified, so kindly and yet sorrowful. He reminds me more than any man I ever knew of King Arthur Pendragon. One can see that he is the descendant of a long line of noble ancestors."

"Dear Pris!" laughed Jane, "how you do enthuse! Yes, he is a nobleman, but I am going to make a confession to you, I am going to open to you the most secret chamber of my heart. Do you know that, though he has completely won my admiration and I am going to become his wife, he seems a stranger to me, somehow?"

"Jane! You don't mean that you don't love him?"

"I suppose, Priscilla, that the mental experience which I am now going through is com-

mon to all girls about to be married. 'Death,' says de Quincy, 'is abhorrent to people of regular habits.' Marriage, under normal conditions, has the same reason for upsetting one. I am going to marry a foreigner, Pris, and be a foreigner: The Princess Nicolas Georgevitch of Croatia, formerly Miss Jane Schuyler of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, U. S. A. I suppose had I become engaged to an American, he would have seemed just as much of a stranger to me. The part about it all that hurts me, Pris, is that these foreigners, when they are really noble and genuine, are more chivalric, more instinctively high-bred than our Americans. Take the case of poor Spiro—"

"Spiro," interrupted Priscilla, solemnly, "was the reincarnation of some ancient hero."

"In a sense, yes. There is hardly a peasant in this country who has not the blood of heroes in his veins. We are a mixed race in America, and we are all in pursuit of the almighty dollar. My Nicolas has shown a delicacy, a devotion, a spirit of self-sacrifice—"

"Self-sacrifice, Jane?"

"Oh, wonderful! I feel that he has given up for me more than I am worth. He was offered a kingdom, Priscilla, for me and he chose me instead."

Miss Bates threw up both her fat hands in wonder, and gazed at Jane, with mouth open,

as though she would drink in this marvellous tale.

For Georgevitch had decided to give Jane this version of the Tarachian incident as soon as possible. He knew that diplomatic secrets, however well guarded, often leaked out. He therefore told Jane, simply and with great dignity that he had been offered a kingdom, on condition that he marry a certain Princess whose name he did not think it necessary to mention, but that he had, of course, refused. The Austrian Minister, of whom he made a confidant, promised to support him, if necessary, in this version, so far as Jane was concerned, and to speak with his colleagues on the matter.

"He is another Archduke of Austria!" gasped Priscilla, when Jane had finished.

"It is sad to form this opinion of one's own countrymen," sighed Jane. "I supposed it was forced upon me more by Washington Laselle's conduct than by anything else. I had known him from childhood. I had the greatest confidence in his honor, his nobility. When he failed me, it seemed as if all America failed me with him."

"Did you love him?" asked Priscilla.

Miss Schuyler's face looked dreamy and there were lines of suffering about her mouth.

"Love dear old Wash? Of course not! It would have been impossible for us to have con-

tinued our intimacy on any other terms than those of friendship. There was that nightmare of mine about my money. Mr. Laselle was about the only, perhaps he was the only possible man whom I knew well, who did not make love to me. And Nicolas, Pris, only think of it, Nicolas would have given up a kingdom for me, believing me a poor girl!"

At this moment the rumble of carriage wheels was heard below, and the two women arose and looked into the mirror, Priscilla to see that her hair was tidy beneath the silken fillet, Jane to make sure that her hat was on straight.

When Georgevitch entered, they were sitting demurely on a couch together, waiting for him.

Priscilla insisted on driving by her house for a supply of doughnuts.

"They will surely have made some wonderful discoveries," she explained, "and the men would not understand it, if I did not bring their prizes with me."

She was doomed to disappointment, however, in so far as the pleasure of distributing the little life preservers was concerned.

The laborers were all gone, and Professor Harkins, with the Director of the American School, was holding the fort.

"I sent them all away," explained the Professor, "as the campaign here may be considered as finished. I have promised, though,"

bowing gallantly to Miss Bates, "I have taken the liberty to promise, that Miss Bates will present to each of them a doughnut in witness of the fact that they have each and all been distinguished by devotion and zeal. They desire to meet her tomorrow, and bid goodbye to us, and I believe they intend to offer Miss Bates some ah, some little testimonial of affection, as they explained it."

"The dear men!" cried Priscilla, genuinely moved. "How sweet of them. Each of them is the reincarnation of some noble ancient soul."

"And now," said the Professor, gravely, "I desire to have a few moments conversation alone with Miss Schuyler. She has taken such a deep interest in the excavations, and, in general, all this work—"

Jane turned to Georgevitch, with a smile.

"You will excuse me for a little while, Nicolas?"

"I will smoke a cigarette," replied Georgevitch affably.

Jane turned enquiringly to the Professor.

"We will go into the tumulus," he said, "there are some things I wish to show you."

"While you are gone," whispered Priscilla, "I will read my letter. I found a letter from West Haddam, at the house, and I am anxious to read it. The envelope is not in Abner's

hand writing, and I am curious. Perhaps he had some one else address it for him."

Jane and the Professor walked down the long "dromos" together and entered the tumulus.

"Miss Schuyler," he began, as they stood together in the vaulted chamber, while the light was that of a room whose window shutters are closed. "I have solved, in fact, the secret of the long passage way. After clearing away the debris at the mouth it proved to be open. I explored it for a long distance, and then again found it closed. We opened this portion, and came upon a deep, dry well. I am now discussing this with Dr. Hawkins. I am of the opinion that it was a sacrificial pit into which the bones of animals sacrificed in honor of the canonized Kings buried in the tumulus were thrown, and Dr. Hawkins leans to that view, though neither of us can explain why the passage was so long. Perhaps—but we will not go into this now. We found some bones at the bottom of the pit, some of which are undoubtedly human. I hope to publish all this, after mature study and reflection."

"You must send me a copy," said Jane, "I shall be so interested to read it!"

"I shall take great pleasure in doing so. I also found this," and he handed a square piece of card board to Jane.

"Why!" she exclaimed, much wondering, "this is my photograph!"

Holding it so that the light fell on it better, she studied it carefully. "It is an old Philadelphia photograph," she continued, "how in the world did it come here? I haven't given away one of those in years."

"I found this, too," said the Professor, "there was no envelope on it, and I read the most of it before I realized that it was of a personal nature."

Jane took a yellow paper, somewhat stained and soiled, between her finger and thumb. She glanced at it, and saw that it began, "My dear Friend—" and was written in French.

The first few lines were unenlightening.

"This does not seem to concern me," she observed.

"I think," replied the Professor, "that it concerns you very much. It is my opinion that, having been found as it was, and under all the, ah, circumstances, that you would be quite justified in reading it."

Her curiosity excited, Jane read on; at first with what might be termed ordinary interest, and then with blanched cheeks and burning eyes. She had come to passages which read:

"Her money was made in wheat speculation and railroads. Her full name is Jane Vandervoert Schuyler . . . she seems to be pos-

sessed of a sort of obsession, the fear that some designing person will marry her for her money. . . . The man who marries her will get a cool ten millions with her, fifty million francs, but I cannot offer you much encouragement, shrewd as you are, unless there is some way that you can make her think that you believe her to be a poor girl, and that you are willing to give up everything for her. I enclose her photograph obtained from a mutual friend. So much for your questions, and now my dear fellow—"

"How came this letter here?" asked Jane, hoarsely.

"The habit of investigation," replied the Professor, "enables me to answer your question with absolute certainty. The letter and photograph were in the pocket of Prince Georgevitch when he met with his terrible accident. They dropped from his pockets into the sacrificial pit into which he fell—for I believe that we shall decide that it was a sacrificial pit, despite the length of the tunnel. The top of the pit was covered, after the accident, to prevent further occurrences of the sort, and they have lain there in safety ever since."

Jane cast a swift glance at the date. Yes, there was no doubt. The Prince had known of her fortune, the exact amount, from the very beginning. All his protestations, his ruses, his

entire plan of siege, were as clear to her now as though an electric light had been turned on them.

She laughed bitterly.

"Your excavations have been a great success, Professor," she remarked. "Your financial backer, I believe that is the term, is it not so, need have no reason to regret the money expended. Will you please ask the Prince to come in here a moment? I wish to see him alone."

Georgevitch entered the dim, musty chamber.

Jane was standing, rigid as a statue, in the middle of it.

"My darling," he began, "how long you were! I was beginning to become jealous from the Professor, furious."

"Prince Georgevitch—"

"Georgevitch?"

"I have called you in here to tell you that our engagement must come to an end. This letter will explain all—" and she handed it to him.

"What is this?" asked Georgevitch looking at it curiously. "I know nothing of this. I swear to you that I never saw it before."

"Spare yourself the trouble. I might have forgiven or overlooked anything but this. I do not blame you. You have simply tried and failed."

"But, my darling, my own Jane, I do love you. Hear me, for God's sake!"

"Don't indulge in any histrionics, pray," her voice was cold and sharp as steel. "If you do not wish me to dismiss you in the presence of the others, you will go out now, make some plausible excuse—you are good at plausibilities—and leave. I shall not return to Athens with you, or see you again. Go!"

With lifted arm, Jane pointed to the doorway.

Georgevitch looked her in the eyes for a moment; his lips drew back from his teeth in a sort of wolf snarl, he took a step forward as though he would strike her, then he made a low bow, and walked out of the vaulted chamber.

Five minutes later, when Priscilla came into the ancient tomb, she found Jane sitting on a marble slab, her hands folded in her lap.

"Oh, Jane!" she bubbled, "poor Abner is dead! His mother writes me. She says that now, having accomplished her purpose of outliving one of us, she is free to die in peace, when the Lord sends for her. If I were as mean as she is I should write and tell her to be sure it is the Lord who sends, when the summons comes."

"Has—has Georgevitch gone?" asked Jane.

"Yes, he said he would walk on ahead, for the exercise."

"Let us go out into the light," said Jane.

## CHAPTER XXXIV

### *Here a Gentleman Dies*

CORNELIUS Schuyler entered his sister's room at the Spiti Merlin, without knocking, and rushed up to her, his hat upon his head.

His eyes were red and bleary, his clothing untidy and he was trembling from excitement, lack of sleep and liquor. He did not take note of Priscilla, who was present.

"Jane," he said, "You must let me have fifty thousand francs tonight. There's no folderol about it, you've got it, and you must let me have it."

"Have you been gambling again?" asked Jane.

"Yes, I have, and I must pay fifty thousand francs tonight. I'm a gentleman, and I've got to pay m'debts of honor and by God, I mean to do it!"

"Did I not tell you, Corny," said Jane, kindly, but firmly, "that I would not give you any more money for this purpose?"

Cornelius began to whimper.

"For God's sake, Jane, for God's sake! Just once, and I swear on my honor as a gentleman, that I'll never gamble again."

"No, Corny," said Jane, "not another cent for cards. I have fully decided. It's the only way to break you of this dreadful habit. If the sharpers with whom you play learn that you can't pay, they won't play with you any more. And I haven't the least doubt that they cheat you."

For half an hour Cornelius raved, pleaded, entreated. At last he realized that his sister was immovable in her resolve.

"You'll be sorry for this!" he cried, "by God, you'll be sorry for this! At eight o'clock tonight I must pay. If I don't have the money by that time, you'll be sorry all your life. Think it over."

"I have thought it over, Cornie," replied Jane wearily.

At half past eight that evening, while she was at dinner, the landlady called her into the hall.

"Your brother is ill, Miss Schuyler," she whispered, "they have sent a carriage to take you to his rooms."

Jane ran out and stepped into the carriage without waiting for hat or wrap. Her idea was that Cornelius had been seized with delirium tremens.

She entered the hall of his lodging, and a maid, who was evidently waiting for her, tapped at his door. An elderly man, with thin

face and white beard, came out. He was professionally calm.

"Miss Schuyler?" he asked. "I am Doctor Makas."

Jane recognized the name of a famous surgeon.

"How is my brother?" she demanded. "What is the matter? Let me go in to him."

"Just one moment, my dear young lady," said the doctor standing before the closed door, and holding his hand on the knob. "Take one moment to calm yourself, to learn something of your brother's condition."

"Has he delirium tremens?" asked Jane. "What is the matter?"

"No, though he was suffering with great excitement. He has met with an accident."

"What sort of an accident? Tell me in heaven's name! Don't torture me!"

"He was, as I say, very nervous. In handling his pistol it appears—"

Jane swayed as though to fall. The surgeon seized her, and placed her gently in a chair.

"Bring some water," he said quietly to the maid.

Before it was brought, Jane sat up.

"Has my brother committed suicide?" she asked.

The shrewd gray eyes regarded her keenly, and saw the stuff of which she was made.

"He has attempted it," he replied.

"Is he dead?" asked Jane, rising suddenly. "Tell me," she commanded.

"He is not dead, but he is very severely wounded. And now, let us go in. But remember you are to be calm. Undue excitement may prove instantly fatal to him."

Jane entered the darkened room, in which there was a nauseating smell of iodoform and various disinfectants. Cornelius was lying on a bed, covered with a sheet. His face was pale and bloodless, and he looked very weak and pitiful. There was something about it that reminded Jane of her brother as a young boy, and the sight nearly broke her heart. The young surgeon standing by him moved away and Jane sat down and took Cornelius' limp, flabby hand. He turned his eyes upon her with perfect recognition.

"I didn't mean to really do it, Jenny," he murmured. "I meant only to frighten you into giving me the money, I'm a bad egg." It was a great effort for him to speak.

"Don't talk, Cornie dear," said Jane, the tears streaming down her cheeks.

"I must talk now or never. I stole the code book. I gave it to a man who won a large sum from me at poker. He offered to take the code book in payment and gave me a week to get it in. If I did not produce it in that time,

he said he would denounce me as a blackleg. What could a gentleman do, Jenny? I was nearly crazy. I thought of a thousand plans of getting into the safe, but none of them would work. One day, at tennis, I saw Laselle hang up his coat in the men's dressing room. I waited my chance and went through his pockets. I found a card in them with some figures written on them. Thinking they might be the combination, I copied them and hurried over to the office. They were what I wanted, all right. I got the book and—and—loaned it to this man. If I'd had any kind of luck, Laselle never would have found out. But he did. He knew I took the book and he didn't squeal on me. Forgive me, Jenny. You—you can't forgive me?"

Something in Jane's eyes prompted the shrill question. The weak hands fluttered toward her.

The doctor sprang forward and took her by the arm.

"He must not talk any more now," he commanded, quietly assisting her to rise. "You must leave the room for awhile. When you may come in, we will call you."

In about half an hour the old surgeon came for Jane. He found her sitting rigidly in a chair, her hands tightly clasped together in her

lap. Her face was pale as death and she was gazing fixedly into vacancy.

"You may come now," said the surgeon, patting her gently on the shoulder.

"Will my brother live?" asked Jane.

"It is necessary that you know the truth, my dear Miss Schuyler. He has but a few moments to live."

She ran back to the room, and entered on tiptoe. She sat down again by her brother's bed, and took his hand in hers.

"I forgive you, Cornie, my poor little brother," and she kissed the pallid lips. "I will ask our Father in Heaven to forgive all your short comings. He alone knows why he makes one weak and another strong."

"Good bye, Jenny."

"Good bye, dear Cornie."

She sat for some time thus, holding his hand, watching the light ebb from the familiar eyes.

At the very last, a look told her that he wished to say one thing more, and she put her ear close to his lips.

"You'll—pay—that—fifty thousand — won't you? When a fellow—is—a gentleman—you—know—Jenny———"

And so passed Cornelius Schuyler.

## CHAPTER XXXV

*Miss Schuyler Meets the American Consul*

YOUNG Schuyler had not been dead over an hour before Jane began to be assailed by the dreadful details unavoidable when death happens in a foreign land.

In certain famous descriptions of the plague we read that wagons pass through the city streets, and that voices are heard calling, mechanically, unfeelingly: "Bring out your dead!" These accounts, so written by great masters of the pen, cause the reader to shudder with terror and pity; and yet, if one stops to think, this that happens in times of plague is nothing so very unusual or out of the ordinary. All the people who died in Florence or London on occasions made memorable in literature, would have been dead now had there been no plague. In times of great epidemics the Grim Reaper swings his scythe a little faster, that is all; every human being on this earth must fall beneath its edge, sooner or later. His wagons go through the streets of every city and every town and hamlet on the globe and the houses that they pass by today they will call at tomorrow or the day after.

Eternally is heard that voice from the street, low yet distinct, business-like, undeniable:

"Bring out your dead!"

Now next door, now farther away, when will it come to our house?

"Bring out your dead!"

Not all the roar of the factories can drown it out, nor the rattle of the traffic vans, nor the croonings of the mothers, nor the music and the laughter of the revellers—

"Bring out your dead!"

Before Jane could hardly realize that her poor, weak, silly brother was no more, the city authorities came with questions that must be answered, as also the funeral director and others, whose duty or business it was to come.

Among other things, she was informed that she must decide immediately whether she wished the remains prepared for transportation to America or not. In any case, there were troublesome and intricate formalities to be attended to.

At this moment, when she felt that she would go mad unless she were let alone, an official appeared to whom she had never been presented, and whom she had never met at any of the Princes' palaces or fashionable houses which she had been in the habit of frequenting.

This official was a native-born American, who was admitted to her presence without question,

and who addressed her in a kindly, yet decisive manner, born of conscious power, authority and experience. He wasted no time on preliminaries, but his first words were pregnant with help and relief.

"You had better go to your rooms, Miss Schuyler, and rest," he said, "you can do nothing farther here, at present. I will attend to all details and formalities. You have positively nothing to think of, so far as these matters are concerned. Come, let me escort you to the street. A carriage is waiting you at the door."

Stooping, he took Jane by the arm and assisted her to rise, which she did, unresistingly.

"To whom am I indebted for—" she began wonderingly glancing at the tall, gaunt, grey-eyed Southerner, who stood before her, hat in hand.

"The American Consul, Colonel Olds. You will, I am sure, trust all these—ah, details, to me?"

"Oh, yes, indeed!" said Jane, "I am so glad you have come! I have heard of you, Colonel Olds."

And why had not Jane met Colonel Olds?

Simply because she had been flying too high for him. Though a gentleman, and a member of a fine old Southern family, he belonged to the Consular Corps in a capital city, where caste

is as rigidly applied as it is among the Hindoos.

By virtue of their position, the members of the diplomatic set associate with the royal and noble families, while from time immemorial the Consul has been more or less excluded from the high circles, he being a representative of that ignoble thing known as "trade," or "commerce."

The Consul, that is to say, is the busiest end of the foreign representation of every nation. You will find him at all strategic points, at all commercial outposts, however disadvantageous or dreary they may be as places of residence, however disagreeable or dangerous as to climate, safeguarding and advancing the interests of the great army of merchants and manufacturers, upon whose success the prestige. the very existence of the nation depends; for it is true, and always has been that a nation, whether its name be Athens, or Phoenicia, or Corinth, or Germany, or England, or the United States, is nothing but a great business concern, and when its business goes down the nation goes down with it.

A nation's Consular Corps, therefore, is of vastly more importance than its diplomatic corps. Its members should be men of experience, judgment and energy, possessing a knowledge of international law, of special law, of details of commerce, of languages, often the

rude and difficult tongues of people otherwise inaccessible. He must be willing to live in exile, to cut himself loose from all home influences and friends, to give up his private interests. and to help others enrich themselves, while he himself lives on a salary from which he can save nothing; and, in the case of the United States, he must be willing to face old age, or other cause of disability, penniless and helpless. For the practice which he has had as Consul will not help him at home. He cannot return to Elmyra or Oskosh or Baton Rouge and open up a Consul's office, and the United States is the only Government and about the only great business concern that saps the youth and energy of its employees of this kind, and then turns them out to starve or live on the bitter bounty of relatives.

Jane had not met Colonel Olds, then, for the reason that in capital cities the Consul is made the victim of Hindoo caste.

At Athens her brother, silly and dissolute, had frequented the houses of princes and ministers, while Jefferson Olds, scholar and gentleman and member of a proud Southern family, attended quietly to the duties of his office, "a horny-handed Consul" as he humorously styled himself, for nothing but a sense of humor will keep a man sweet in a situation of this kind, which will be remedied sometime: either by giv-

ing the Consuls in capitals diplomatic rank, or removing them to other towns.

It was the American Consul, then, who came to Jane's rescue in the hour of her great need, and saved her from a mass of painful and maddening detail, before which she found herself utterly helpless. It was he who drew out of her, while she was too stunned to think, that she really desired to take the remains of her brother back to America, and he who attended to all the necessary preparations.

"You are not to think of any of these things, my dear Miss Schuyler," he commanded, "and from now on nobody will even speak to you about them. You are simply to prepare to sail on the German Steamer Bayern, one week from today, and to spend the time in saying the necessary adieus. The remains of your unfortunate brother will not go on the same ship. Give me the name of your business man in Philadelphia, and I will communicate with him on the subject of the reception and the funeral there. You will go to him immediately on arriving in Philadelphia."

"I don't know how I shall ever thank you, Mr. Olds," said Jane. "I don't know what I should have done without you."

"I am simply doing my duty, and now you will devote your attention to whatever preparations you have to make for departure."

Jane promised; and now that she was free to collect her thoughts, she realized that her first imperative duty was to clear the name of Washington Laselle from reproach. In fact, this purpose had not been out of her mind for a moment since Cornelius' death and his confession of guilt.

## CHAPTER XXXVI

*And is Congratulated by the American Minister*

SHE went therefore, within two hours after the tragedy, to the Legation. The Minister was not in. He had just heard the sad news and had driven to Cornelius' lodgings, from there to the Spiti Merlin, and thence to the Consulate. Learning that Colonel Olds was in charge of the case, he returned to the Legation, where he found Jane waiting for him.

The Hon. Franklin Parsons took Jane's hand and held it, as she arose upon his entrance into the room.

He said nothing in the way of conventional condolence.

"I have just been to your house to find you," he began, "I am glad you came here." Patting her hand in a fatherly way he led her to a chair and sat down near her. "I have been to the Consulate," he continued, "and learned that Colonel Olds has seen you. I am very glad on—on occasions of this kind that we have such a man as Colonel Olds for consul."

"Mr. Parsons," said Jane, sitting up straight and rigid, "I come to ask you to help me right a great wrong, a wrong done to a noble and honest gentleman." She talked straight to the

point without the least faltering. She was greatly excited and her face was very pale. "Washington Laselle was not guilty in the affair of the Code Book. My brother—"

Her voice was higher than her usual gentle modulated tones. The Minister sprang to his feet and closed the door of his office.

"But it is necessary that all the world should know the truth," cried Jane, noticing the action. "I intend that the whole world shall know it!"

"Calm yourself," said Mr. Parsons, "try to calm yourself. I understand that you wish to clear your old friend Laselle's reputation, and so do I. That is natural. The whole world shall know the truth, of course. But, in the meantime, it would be better if you explained the whole affair to me clearly, without excitement."

Jane lowered her voice.

"My poor brother confessed to me when he was dying but a short while ago, that he took the Code Book from the safe and sold it. He was a dreadful gambler and lost heavily. I had refused to furnish him any more money for this purpose, and he was desperate."

"But he did not have the combination. Only Laselle had it."

"He—he learned the combination through no fault of Mr. Laselle's. Oh, he must be cleared,

immediately, today! You must not take into consideration anything except that a wrong has been done and that it must be righted. You must cable the State Department and he must be reinstated. But the public must know—his friends—"

"But you are becoming excited again," said the Minister, patting one of the white hands that were clenched about the arm of the chair in which she was holding herself rigidly erect, "and I don't wonder at it. But listen to me. If I find a way to have Mr. Laselle reinstated in full favor, and his name entirely cleared, without leaving a stigma upon that of your poor brother, who, after all, was only weak and mislead, not bad, would that not be better?"

"Yes," admitted Jane, "if that could be done. But the public must know who is the real—"

Loosing her grip upon the chair arms she sank back, and covered her face, that was working with grief, with her handkerchief. The Minister rose and walked to the window, affording her the relief of sobbing a few moments, unobserved and alone.

"There are such things as secret archives," continued Mr. Parsons, at last, "and in these can the history of this unfortunate affair, so far as the incident of the code book is con-

cerned, be buried. It can be given out that the name of the real offender has been discovered, but let us say, for reasons of state, cannot be divulged. 'Reasons of State' is one of those vague, diplomatic expressions which really mean nothing, and yet sound convincing. It will readily be supposed that the emissary of some foreign government took the book. I think I can arrange this, my dear Miss Schuyler. I'll get a long cable off immediately, and as soon as I receive anything definite in the shape of an answer, I'll let you know."

Mr. Parsons' extreme tact and the spectacle of Jane's grief and shame prevented him from asking why Washington Laselle had preferred to sacrifice his own reputation and career rather than give Cornelius Schuyler up to justice.

He contented himself rather with glancing keenly at Jane and he thought he understood, without asking.

She was a superb woman, a woman of the sort that men do all sorts of mad and Quixotic things for.

The conviction flashed through the minister's mind that Laselle loved Jane; and then he remembered that she was engaged to Georgevitch, and a feeling of resentment, of anger against her that he could scarcely control, surged up in his breast.

"You are leaving for America soon?" he asked.

"A week from now, on the Bayern."

"And your fiancé will accompany you?"

There was something almost brutal in the question, under the circumstances, and the minister's voice was not as agreeable as it had been a moment before. He was very fond of Laselle and men do not easily forgive women who destroy their friends.

Jane replied very meekly:

"I have no fiancé. My friend Miss Bates is coming with me."

"Do you mean," cried Mr. Parsons, quite forgetting his diplomatic reserve, "that you are not going to marry Georgevitch? That the engagement is broken off?"

The minister had his own opinion of Georgevitch.

Jane looked bravely into the minister's eyes. She was not offended. She understood that the questions were inspired by a friendly interest, and one's minister, is, after all, the representative of whatever power one respects and obeys.

"I am not going to marry Prince Nicolas Georgevitch," she murmured, "nor—nor see him again."

There are many ways of saying things, and Jane felt it her right that there should be no

doubt in the minister's mind as to who had broken off the engagement.

Mr. Parsons took a step forward, with outstretched hand.

"I congratulate—" he began, his voice ringing. "Oh, I beg pardon, Miss Schuyler." He accompanied her to the door. "I shall hope to see you again, before you leave, and Mrs. Parsons will come to see you. If there is anything either of us can do for you, don't fail to let us know. And have no uneasiness about Mr. Laselle. In a few hours the Department shall know of his innocence, and I promise to use all my influence and energy toward putting him in a better position in the eyes of the world than he was before—before all this happened."

## CHAPTER XXXVII

*Prince Georgevitch Finds Life Worth Living*

ABOUT a week after Miss Schuyler's departure from Athens, the Prince of Tarachia and Prince Nicolas Georgevitch were strolling along Kephyssia street together, talking earnestly.

The former had seen the latter frequently, and was on bowing terms with him. This was the first time in their lives that the two men had held a long and serious conversation together.

"I sought you out," the Prince of Tarachia was saying, "to let you know how shabbily I think you have been treated by the Great Powers. Through exceptional advantages and connections, I am in possession of the facts. My sincerity will be all the more apparent to you, when I inform you that I was to a certain extent a rival of yours."

Georgevitch looked at him enquiringly.

"Yes, I—that is, my name was also proposed, but you were so much the favorite that I really stood no chance."

"I appreciate your sympathy," said Georgevitch, drily. "It seems we were rivals for a lying mistress—the Favor of the Great Powers."

"But all is not ended," said the Prince of Tarachia, in a low tone. "The dance has but just begun. I have private advices that the chief men of Tarachia will not accept the dictum of the Great Powers. You can make a football of a man, and kick him back and forth, for your amusement, but you cannot do the same with a spirited and courageous people."

Georgevitch stopped in the middle of the walk and stood looking into the eyes of the other, who also stopped.

"Well?" he said.

"The province will declare itself independent. If you are on the ground, and put yourself at the head of the movement, they will make you Prince. Certain leading men have been approached on the subject, and have consented. The rumor has got abroad among the people to a certain extent. We will spread it. We will set the country aflame. If you act now, the Powers will be in a dilemma."

Georgevitch began to walk again, quite rapidly despite his limp. Then he stopped a second time, suddenly, his companion stopping with him, a habit learned in Athens.

"And you?" he asked.

"If I cannot take first best, I will be content with second. I have a large following in the province. I will throw my influence, my resources on your side. We can even cross the

frontiers with a picked band from here, trained officers and soldiers, men of good families, who will go with us for various motives. You and I will talk over the terms, I am stagnating here. If I help you to a crown ,you will be able to repay me."

The twain walked on again, more slowly.

"It's a desperate venture," mused Georgevitch aloud. "I must think deeply of it, and have all the information possible."

As they were thus walking and talking, they were met by Professor Harkins, who saluted them and passed on: then, seized by a sudden impulse, turned back and overtook them.

"I am leaving Athens tomorrow," he announced, "after a successful and altogether satisfactory campaign. Good bye, Prince, I am now saying my final adieus."

The Professor talked for some little time, ignoring a certain insolence in Georgevitch's manner, and even stood watching the departing couple, after they had unceremoniously left him.

Georgevitch arrived at his rooms in deep thought. He was so abstracted that he forgot even to be annoyed by his man, who lingered about with the evident desire of saying something to him; nor did he even glance at the pile of letters and invitations on the table in the center of the room.

Instead he paced up and down with his hands in his pockets, and studied deeply.

While he was thus engaged, there was a tapping on the door. Thinking that his man desired to enter, Georgevitch told him, in Servian, to betake himself to warmer regions.

The door opened and Professor Goodwin Harkins entered.

"To what do I owe the pleasure of your visit?" asked Georgevitch, "and, by the way. is it of the American customs to invade a gentleman's privateness without sending up your card?"

"I found your street door open," explained the Professor, "and I walked up. I knocked, and I understood you to tell me to come in."

"I told you—well, now that you are in, I repeat, what do you want?"

"To perform a duty. I realize that you have no reason to feel kindly toward me, and it is partly for that reason that the duty seems the clearer. I have reason to believe that the person with whom you were walking today on Kephyssia street is responsible for your having fallen into the ancient sacrificial pit."

"Sacrificial pit?"

"Such, I am convinced, was its purpose, though this is neither the time nor place to enter into an argument on that point. What I came to say is this: Some months ago I had

a wonderful dream in the theatre of Dyonisus. In the course of that dream certain things were said in Greek, which I did not at the time understand. I opened my eyes and saw the man with whom you were walking today, passing near me. When I saw him today, I immediately recognized him, and the significance of his words, spoken then, flashed over me. It appears that a portion of my dream, at least, was reality. I make this suggestion, out of a friendly motive. Perhaps you may have some way, may know enough to save yourself from further danger. I do not wish to see you destroyed. That is all; good day."

Without waiting for any response, the Professor turned and left the room. Georgevitch, standing motionless for several moments, looked at the open door through which he had disappeared. Whistling softly, he continued his promenade up and down the room.

While he was thus occupied, Elias entered.

"Your Highness," he said, "may I speak to you?"

"You seem to be doing so, though I have not given you permission."

"It is nothing of importance, Your Highness. I merely desire to know when I shall have the ten thousand francs?"

"The what! Oh, the ten thousand francs? You shall have them when I become the possessor of ten million American dollars."

"And when will that be, Highness?"

"According to present indications, never."

"Does Your Highness mean that I am not to have the ten thousand francs?"

"I mean what I have said. Now leave, before I lose my patience!"

"You cannot frighten he," said Elias, insolently, "I am a Montenegran. And do you think I was fool enough to destroy the letter? I have it, and will post it, if I do not get the money immediately. You promised it."

"The letter, Elias," explained Georgevitch, smiling, "was addressed to an American heiress, whom I expected to marry. From her dowry I expected to pay you the ten thousand francs. The lady has changed her mind, and I cannot pay you the ten thousand francs, because I have not got them. You are perfectly at liberty to mail the letter now. I have a mild interest in it, however, and will give a small sum for it—say, 100 francs."

After considerable haggling, the Prince bought the letter for two hundred francs from his man, whom he immediately discharged, giving him one hour to leave the house.

Alone at last, the Prince wrote the following missive:

"My Dear Miss Schuyler:

Knowing your kindness of heart, I have feared that you might suffer of some compunctions from conscience for the way in which you have dismissed me, or be troubled lest I were suffering from losing you. I therefore enclose to you a letter which I wrote and sent to you several days ago. Fortunately my servant, whom I sent after it, has kept it. It will explain itself. You will see from this that my proposal to you was only a dernier resort and that I dropped you as soon as something better presented itself, taking up with you again when the other thing failed. You readily understand, then, that I am not pining away, but that I had really anticipated you with your own move, though, kinder than you, I did suggest a way by which we might have seen much from each other.

Yours sincerely,

Georgevitch."

Enclosing this in an envelope together with the letter he addressed the cover to Miss Schuyler.

"I have another score to settle," he muttered. "Life is still sweet."

Descending to the street, he called a cab, and ordered the driver to take him to the Prince of Tarachia's lodgings.

On the way he stopped at a mail box and posted the letter to Jane.

Arrived, he informed the Prince of Tarachia that he required no longer time for thought and that he was willing to join any expedition that would set out immediately for the Province, with the object of fomenting the popular discontent, now existing, into open revolution.

"We will go together, my dear Prince," he concluded. "I will collect as many of my friends as possible. You do the same, and between us we ought to be able to lead across the border a respectable body of desperate men. As to who shall be king we will let the popular will decide. My chief object is revenge, to show the world that a Georgevitch is not to be trifled with!"

## CHAPTER XXXVIII

### *Archaeology and Ice Cream*

SEVERAL months later the Washington Branch of the American Archæological Society held a meeting in the spacious parlors of Miss Jessie Brownloe, a millionaire old maid and society leader. Although only the members were present, the rooms were crowded, and many fashionable equipages stretched in a line before the front door of the elegant residence on Pennsylvania Avenue; for the shrewd and capable President of the Branch had hit upon the idea of making social functions of the Society meetings, thereby insuring their success and bringing many dollars into the Society's bottomless treasury.

Possessing, with his great business ability, a keen sense of humor, it was he who told the famous story of one of the most enthusiastic members, a lady who "never could remember whether the Parthenon was on the Acropolis, or the Acropolis on the Parthenon!"

But this charming and virginal archæological innocence he regarded as a mere detail. The main thing was to have the meetings held in the right houses and induce the right people to come, and the thing was a success. Ice

cream and Indian Mythology—petits fours and Protocorinthianism, Gossip and Egyptology, were readily swallowed when taken together, he found.

Professor Goodwin Harkins was the lecturer of the evening. He threw upon a screen many illustrations of the ancient tomb on the slopes of Hymettus and of the objects taken therefrom. His lecture was most interesting, even to the ladies who were not sure of the relative positions of the Parthenon and the Acropolis. The only portion that was at all dry and that caused various of the members to long for the aftermath of ice cream and petits fours, was his learned discussion of the deep well reached from the tomb by means of a long, narrow passage, and which he now boldly proclaimed a sacrificial pit.

In the front row of the audience sat Mrs. Goodwin Harkins, formerly Priscilla Bates, attired in a simple, but fashionable gown of the present century.

After her departure from Greece the Professor had discovered that she had become a necessary factor in his existence and he hastened to West Haddam to tell her so.

He had arrived just in time, for he found Priscilla deeply immersed in Theosophy and fully persuaded that she was the reincarnation of an ancient Buddhist priestess.

After listening to the Professor's candid and earnest avowal, she decided to put off her journey to India till another reincarnation and to link her fate with his during the remainder of this earthly existence.

Next to Priscilla, in the same row, sat Miss Jane Schuyler of Philadelphia, and His Excellency, Washington Laselle, whose commission as Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary to the Argentine Republic had that day been signed by the President.

After the lecture, and after the ice cream, the petits fours and the gossip, these two walked together through the quiet, beautiful streets to the Willard, where Miss Schuyler was stopping.

It was early Autumn and the leaves were dropping from the trees that lined the avenue, but the fireflies that had outlingered the Summer were rising like wind-blown embers from the lawns.

"It seems," Laselle was saying, "that Georgevitch learned that it was the Prince of Tarachia who attempted his life, and that he went up into the Province with him for the sole purpose of finding an opportunity for revenge; that, with several of his own followers, he seized the Prince one moonlight night and threw him over a high cliff, killing him instantly. After that, the Prince of Tarachia's

followers attacked Georgevitch and his band, without success. The two factions are now operating in different parts of the Province. The Department is informed that a condition resembling anarchy exists there. The Powers have advised Turkey that it must restore order, or they will occupy the territory with an international army. If, Jane, you would like to hear the news as to Georgevitch from time to time, details that do not get into the papers,—if you are interested to any degree——"

"I haven't the least interest in Georgevitch or his doings," replied Jane, shuddering, "and, well, any other subject of conversation that you might choose would be more agreeable to me."

They walked on in silence for some distance. As they neared the Willard, Jane asked: "How soon are you sailing?"

"Almost immediately. I have my orders to leave as soon as possible."

At the door Jane said, in a low tone:

"Come in a moment, Wash, I want to speak to you about—about poor Corney, before you go."

He pulled two luxurious arm chairs up close together and they sat down in the vast, dimly lighted room.

Jane remained silent for several moments, looking at the floor. At length she asked, without raising her eyes.

"Why did you make such a great, such a fearful sacrifice for my poor brother?"

"I thought," replied Laselle, immediately, and speaking deliberately, "that it would save him. That it would put him in a position where it would be impossible for him to continue in his old course. That he would understand——"

"That his future no longer belonged to himself, that it had been bought at a great price," concluded Jane, with emotion.

"Perhaps. But is not all that a matter of past history now?"

"Not all. There is one thing I want to know. Would you have done this—this chivalric thing, if he had not been my brother?"

"If you want me to say," replied the Minister to the Argentine Republic, gently tapping the toe of his shoe with his slender walking stick, and still speaking deliberately, "that I did it because I loved you, because I have always loved you, because I had lost all interest in my own life, save in so far as it might be of some service to you, I shall not say it. I have long ago told you that I should never make love to you. I believe I never have."

"There is nobody in the room," whispered Jane. "You haven't kissed me in ten years."

Laselle looked up. There was a whimsical smile on the sweet lips, though the beautiful eyes were filled with tears.

"It is twenty," he replied, "and it seems twenty thousand."

They leaned to each other and their lips met.

PROPERTY
OF THE
NEW YORK
SOCIETY LIBRARY

ARTI et VERITATI